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DUNGEON®

A Dungeons & Dragons® Roleplaying Game Supplement

DUNGEON®

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ABOUT THE COVER: *Caught in the wake of a passing ship is a bottle of trouble. Eric Belisle captures the magic hour in this month's feature illustration for "Captain Slygo's Treasure."*

DUNGEON

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DUNGEON *November 2012*

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One Piece at a Time

By Christopher Perkins

A year ago, a freelance writer named Timothy Ide submitted a proposal for a pirate adventure. I had never worked with Timothy before, but I knew him from his previous work, namely "Train of Events" in *Dungeon* #44 and "The Rat Trap" in *Dungeon* #62.

Timothy's adventure revolves around a down-on-his-luck goblin pirate named Slygo and a treasure map that sets the whole adventure in motion. I requested a complete first draft, which Timothy submitted six months later . . . right around the time we were trying to fill a galleon-sized hole in this issue. In May, after Timothy delivered the goods, I set to the task of writing art descriptions for the illustrations that would accompany the adventure, including this month's featured illo:

In the foreground, a corked BOTTLE floats in the wake of a passing SHIP. Inside the bottle is a rolled-up piece of PARCHMENT with a map and some writing on it. The bottle is the focus of the illustration. It would be cool to see a couple GOBLINS on the ship's deck or in the crow's nest, if the composition allows it.

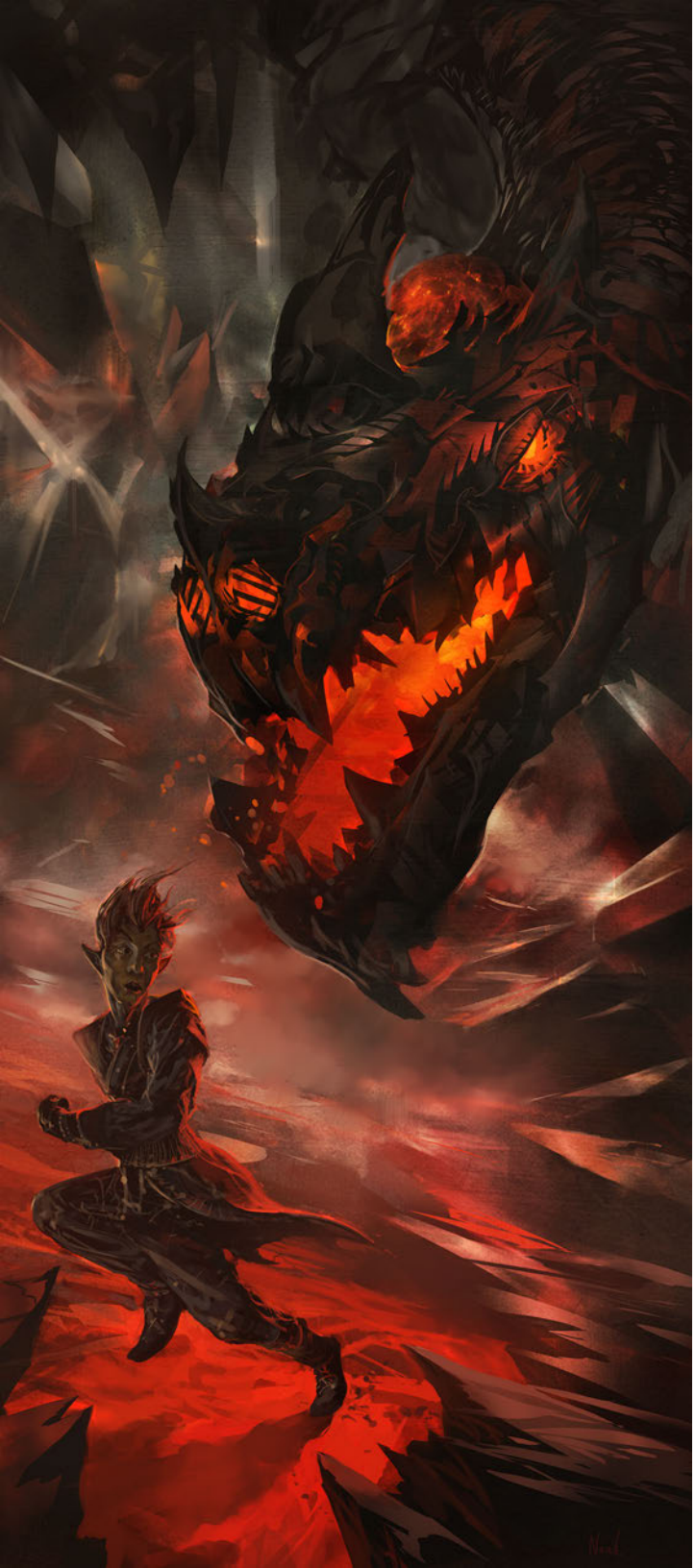
Four weeks later, in June, Eric Belisle sent us four different thumbnail sketches for the cover. Each one captured the important details while presenting them in a slightly different composition. Kate Irwin, Jon Schindehette, and I picked the sketch we liked best, Kate sent Eric our feedback, and in late August, his final illustration arrived. It was *exactly* the image I had in my head, and it blew us all out of the water.

In early September, I took a crack at developing the adventure. One thing I added was Vex, an imp sidekick for the main villain, which was an underhanded move to inject a little of this month's theme—Demons & Devils—into the adventure.

Also in September, we received Mike Schley's beautiful renditions of Timothy's maps, which weren't bad to start with. (Timothy's a very rare breed—a writer who's also an illustrator.) As usual, Mike gave us exactly what we were hoping for: clean, colorful maps for DMs to drool over.

In early October, Timothy's adventure went to Chris Sims for further development before landing on Kim Mohan's desk. It all happened so fast, yet I need to remind myself that it's been a year since Timothy first pitched the idea. How time flies! Compare that to "Elves with Demonic Designs," another of this month's offerings. It's been fluttering around the office like a trapped moth for the better part of two years, waiting for the right issue to call home.

You want to know a secret? I suck at jigsaw puzzles, and every issue is like a giant jigsaw puzzle that takes forever to put together. What you see here represents more time and effort than you know, and I know five writers who've been waiting patiently while producers, art directors, artists, cartographers, developers, editors, and typesetters wrangle their articles. One piece at a time, one day at a time: It's the only way anything this good ever gets done.



Some Assembly Required

A D&D® adventure for characters of levels 1-3

By Jobe Bittman

Illustrations by Noah Bradley and Ralph Horsley
Cartography by Sean Macdonald

A creeping dread has taken hold in the Barony of Harkenwold. Unknown raiders plunder the surrounding farms and disappear into the night. The crimes are being perpetrated by a tribe of kobolds united under an abominable master—the reanimated brain of a dragon, kept in a jar. The kobolds are stealing materials to construct a new body for their master. The adventurers must uncover the criminals and track them back to their hideout in an old mine, where the dragon's new body is being assembled.

"Some Assembly Required" is a D&D adventure set in the Nentir Vale. It is designed for characters of levels 1-3 and makes a great introductory adventure for launching a new campaign.

Background

Over a hundred years ago, a red dragon came to the Nentir Vale to claim the territory as his own. The dragon was known as Kerang, and he was fearsome to behold. Kerang demanded tribute from the surrounding lands, razed farms, and gorged himself on livestock until the frightened populace gave in to his demands. Tales of Kerang spread from tavern to tavern. Champions came to challenge the red dragon, but Kerang dispatched them with ease. Then the druid Merlius Karnblack arrived.

Merlius knew Kerang would never be taken by force alone. The clever druid watched the dragon for months until he was ready to launch his plan. Merlius concocted a potent sleeping potion that would cause the drinker to slumber for a hundred years. A sealed vial of the bitter mixture was sewn up inside of Kerang's tribute of livestock.

The dragon consumed his tribute the next day. Within hours, Kerang felt the potion taking effect. He rushed to the safety of his lair in the Briar Hills, but it was too late. The dragon thrashed wildly as he began to lose consciousness. Merlius sent the signal, and workers from the nearby mine brought the entire cave down on their tormentor.

So ended the reign of Kerang. That might have been the end of his story had it not been for his faithful kobold wyrmpriest, Birk. Long after the rest of the tribe had fled, Birk pined for the master he had failed. The wyrmpriest clawed a tunnel into the dragon's tomb and recovered Kerang's brain. He sought out a necromancer to coax Kerang's brain back to life,

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but it was all for naught. The magic-induced coma kept the dragon silent, even in undeath. Preserved in a jar, the brain was passed from generation to generation as an object of worship.

After a hundred years had passed, Kerang awoke in horror. He vowed to reclaim his territory and utterly destroy the descendants of those who brought him so low. With the help of the kobold tribes he now holds in thrall, Kerang is excavating his bones and creating a new body, a massive construct.

Running the Adventure

"Some Assembly Required" is a location-based adventure. Each keyed location on the map corresponds to an entry in the adventure text.

Rests

As the player characters venture deeper into the mine, taking rests becomes more problematic. Short rests should be uneventful, but the adventurers need to take precautions before an extended rest. More than one extended rest also forfeits the effects the party receives from successful completion of the "Hot on the Trail" encounter. In addition, the kobolds might have time to reinforce their positions. Use your best judgment when resetting traps and encounters.

Treasure

The characters gain about a level during the adventure, so you should assign ten treasures beyond the few that are already described in the text. Spread them out among the encounters however you wish, but be sure to award some treasure as part of the dragon's hoard in the final encounter.

The kobolds, miners of old, and other denizens of the mine have collected various common items. As the party uncovers treasure, you can include objects from the Mundane Items table.

MUNDANE ITEMS

d20	Mundane Item
1	Rusty shovel
2	Ball of twine
3	Small idol of Kurtulmak (kobold deity)
4	Soiled blanket
5	Iron skillet
6	Chisel
7	Axe handle
8	Tough meat jerky
9	50-foot coil of hempen rope
10	Mining pick
11	Hammer and nails
12	Flask of water (full)
13	Empty rat trap
14	Dented mining pan
15	Backpack
16	2 sunrods
17	Leather straps
18	Belt pouch
19	Small iron helm
20	Jeweler's loupe

Kobolds

The kobolds have trained giant weasels, which they use in battle and sometimes as mounts.

Try playing up the humorous side of the kobolds. They would be downright comical if it weren't for their malevolence. The Kobold Victory Chart (published in *Dragon* 364 in the "Creature Incarnations" article) has some ideas for spicing up encounters with the creatures.

Kobold patrols travel in and out of the mine, delivering fresh supplies. If you need one, a patrol consists of either three kobold quickblades or two kobold quickblades and a giant weasel.

Kobold Quickblade **Level 1 Skirmisher**
Small natural humanoid (reptile) XP 100

HP 29; **Bloodied** 14 **Initiative** +5
AC 15, **Fortitude** 12, **Reflex** 14, **Will** 12 **Perception** +1
Speed 6 Darkvision

Standard Actions
⊕ **Short Sword** (weapon) ✦ **At-Will**
Attack: Melee 1 (one creature); +6 vs. AC
Hit: 1d6 + 3 damage. The attack deals 2 extra damage per square the kobold has shifted since the start of its turn.

Move Actions
Fleet Feet ✦ **At-Will**
Effect: The kobold shifts up to 3 squares.

Minor Actions
Shifty ✦ **At-Will**
Effect: The kobold shifts 1 square.

Skills Athletics +4, Stealth +8, Thievery +8
Str 8 (-1) **Dex** 17 (+3) **Wis** 13 (+1)
Con 13 (+1) **Int** 9 (-1) **Cha** 10 (+0)
Alignment evil **Languages** Common, Draconic
Equipment leather armor, light shield, short sword

Giant Weasel **Level 1 Skirmisher**
Medium natural beast XP 100

HP 26; **Bloodied** 13 **Initiative** +5
AC 15, **Fortitude** 12, **Reflex** 14, **Will** 12 **Perception** +1
Speed 7 Low-light vision

Traits
Low Profile
The weasel moves at normal speed while squeezing.

Standard Actions
⊕ **Bite** ✦ **At-Will**
Attack: Melee 1 (one creature); +6 vs. AC
Hit: 1d8 + 4 damage.

Move Actions
Skitter ✦ **At-Will**
Effect: The weasel can shift up to half its speed. During this movement, it can move through enemy spaces.

Str 9 (-1) **Dex** 16 (+3) **Wis** 12 (+1)
Con 10 (+0) **Int** 3 (-4) **Cha** 9 (-1)
Alignment unaligned **Languages** –

Starting the Adventure

Dardun, a village in the Barony of Harkenwold, is being plagued by a rash of crimes perpetrated under cover of darkness. Baron Stockmer, the ruler of the barony, enlists the help of the adventurers to discover the source of the problem.

When you are ready to start, read:
The good people of Dardun are terrified of the night. It all began a few months ago when commonplace items started disappearing—boxes of nails, a length of rope, canvas tarps. A hammer carelessly left on a table would be gone when the owner returned to retrieve it. The mysterious thefts soon became more frequent and brazen, but they always occurred in the dead of night. A farmer would rise in the morning to find several chickens and fence posts had vanished. Two nights ago, the situation grew dire. Two local youths, Kevmar Windsnap and his younger sister Zeta, struck out to solve the mystery alone. Kevmar's body was later found in an open field. His sister is missing. Baron Stockmer, the ruler of Harkenwold, has sent out a call for true heroes to solve the mystery at Dardun.

Dardun

Along the White River in the eastern portion of Harkenwold is the village of Dardun. The town has a general store, an inn with two rooms, and an administrative building used mostly for harvests. Thatch-roofed hovels dot the farmland surrounding the town.

When the characters enter the village, read:
Walking along a dirt road nestled in the grass plains along the White River, you wander into a small village surrounded by farmland, vineyards, and apple orchards. A woodcut sign swinging in the breeze reads "Dardun."

A gaggle of farmers are gathered in the center of town, embroiled in a heated discussion.

When the adventurers approach, read:
An aging farmer, bald except for graying hair in the center of his head, introduces himself as Mattzog Belluc. The man has an affable look, but his mood is somber. "A bloody business this is. I pray ye been sent to help us. I'm sure ye heard about the murder by now. The body's not been buried yet if ye wish to see it. The townsfolk have tales to tell, too. Come talk to me if ye be needing any help."

The villagers refer to Mattzog as the mayor, although he holds no official title. Mattzog solemnly recounts the story of the thefts and recent murders.

Quests

The player characters can earn additional XP awards for completing quests. The villagers of Dardun plead with the party to help with the following tasks.

Major Quest: Justice for Kevmar

3rd-Level Major Quest (150 XP/character)
"It ain't right what they done to Kevmar. He was just a boy. Butchered him like a pig, they did, and left him to bleed out. Whoever done this oughta be brought to justice."

The characters must drive off the kobolds in the area. They succeed by killing every kobold in the mine or by killing Kerang, which causes surviving kobolds to leave the area.

Major Quest: Rescue Zeta Windsnap

2nd-Level Major Quest (125 XP/character)
"No sign of the younger sister, neither. That little tomboy never leaves her brother's side. Dead is what she is, most like, but there's still hope. Oh, the horrors that poor girl musta seen!"

The characters must return Zeta safely to the village to earn this award.

Hot on the Trail

Roleplaying Encounter

The people of the village still have not identified the perpetrators of the crimes. This roleplaying encounter requires the player characters to uncover the culprits and track them back to their hideout. Allow the adventurers to explore the clues in any order they like. Keep a running total of the number of successfully deciphered clues. Consider a clue successfully deciphered if the party beats at least one of the clue's skill checks. Deciphering three or more clues means the encounter is successful.

Clue 1: Kevmar's Body

The slain boy is being kept in the center of town.

If the party goes to see the body, read:
Mattzog leads you to a wagon buzzing with flies. Kevmar's body lies under a tarp. The corpse is covered in puncture wounds on the front and back.

Heal (DC 8): Kevmar's wounds are the result of piercing weapons, most likely spears or javelins.

Insight or Perception (DC 12): The angle of the wounds suggests the attackers were small of stature.

Clue 2: Witnesses

This clue can take place immediately after clue 1 or anytime while the adventurers explore the town. Eyewitness testimony is notoriously unreliable. The witness in this case embellishes the story.

When the adventurers are ready, read:
A plump farmer steps forward, claiming to have seen one of the monsters.

Diplomacy (DC 12): The peasants are not used to being addressed with deference. The witness eagerly

offers the following not-entirely-reliable information: "Looked like lil' dragons, they did. And they flew with big bat wings. Carried off me favorite sheep."

Intimidate or Streetwise (DC 12): The villagers are wary of ruffians and slick talkers. The witness backpedals from having seen the creatures very well. It was dark and they were in shadow. The beasts were small and reptilian, and they made yipping noises when they spoke.

Clue 3: Burglarized Shed

The burglarized shed is located near the center of Dardun. This clue event can occur anytime the party is in town. A trail of dropped nails leads from the shed to clue 4.

When the adventurers are ready, read:
A large woman in a baker's hat waves to get your attention. "One of the sheds here in town was broke into a few nights ago. No one's gone inside since. I can take you there, if you like."

Thievery (DC 12): The theft is the work of amateurs. They obviously came in through the unlocked window above the workbench. The thieves would have to be small to fit through the window.

Perception or Insight (DC 12): The character realizes that searching around the outside of the shed might be a good idea. The search turns up a purple crystal. A trail of dropped nails leads to clue 4.

Clue 4: Footprints

This clue is found in a grassy field on the edge of town. The party can discover it by following the trail of dropped nails from the burglarized shed, by searching the general area around town for clues, or by asking to be led to the scene of the murder. If the heroes didn't arrive from the burglarized shed, they notice a trail of nails leading to clue 3.

When the adventurers are ready, read:
The glint of metal attracts your eye to a patch of tall grass near where Kevmar's body was found. Among the reeds, you spot a dagger crusted in dried blood. Several sets of clawed feet have left impressions in the soft earth. A trail of footprints leads north but quickly fades away.

Perception (DC 12): The footprints wind through a cornfield. Every twenty or thirty feet, dried blood spatters can be spotted on the ground or terrain. After the trail reaches the woods, it turns east. A dead kobold is slumped against a tree, clutching at a wound in its chest. A rolled sheet of paper in its pocket shows a technical drawing of a wing made of canvas. Scribbled measurements show that the wing is over ten feet long.

Nature (DC 12): A search of the corpse reveals rock dust under the fingernails and toe claws, possibly from a mine or cave. The drawing of the wing is also discovered (if it hasn't already been found).

Clue 5: Sigil of Kerang

This clue can be found after following the kobold footprints or searching farther outside town. The sigil is carved into a tree.

When the adventurers are ready, read:
You spot a crude emblem cut into a gnarled oak. Judging from the dripping sap, the carving was recently engraved. The emblem depicts a haloed dragon.

History (DC 12): The symbol has local historical importance to some of the villagers. If the check result is 19 or higher, the character immediately recalls the terrible tale of Kerang the Red Dragon, slain over a hundred years ago in the mountains nearby (see the "Background" section).

Religion (DC 12): Humanoid species often carve symbols into trees to mark territory for their gods. The halo shows that this symbol holds a religious connotation.

Success or Failure

The characters succeed if they decipher three or more clues. Otherwise, they fail.

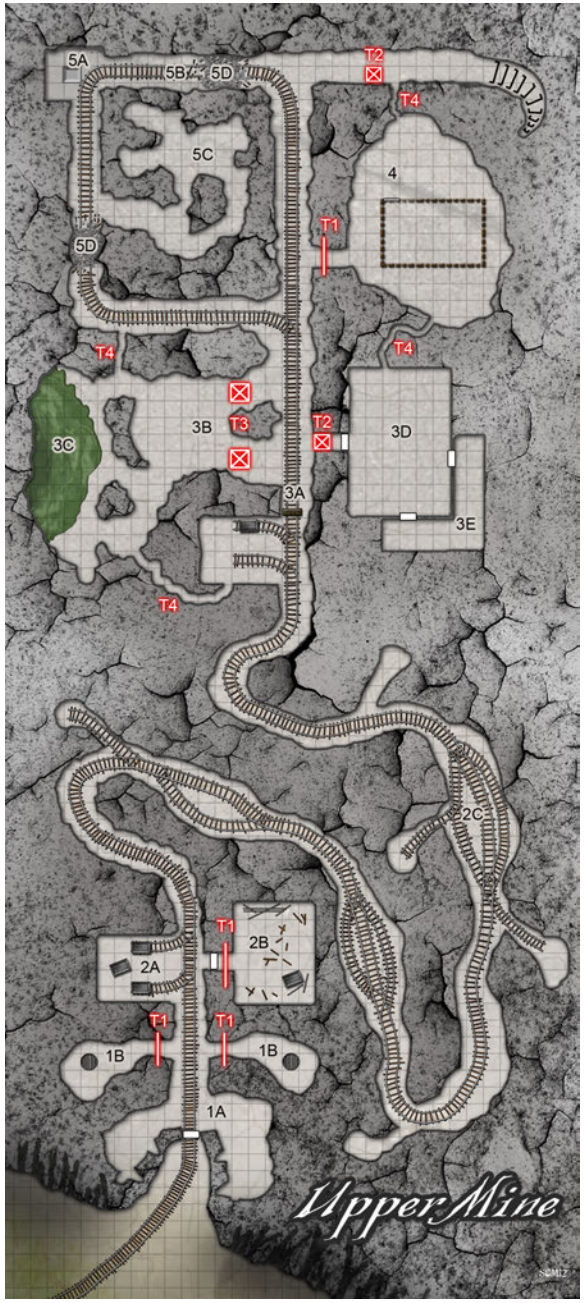
Success: The adventurers have won a small victory against Kerang. Award each character 10 XP per successfully deciphered clue. Quickly discovering the source of the kobold incursions allows the party to reach Kerang's lair before his new body is completed. See the "Development" section of encounter 10.

Mattzog can answer any questions the characters have while they are in town. The rock dust and purple crystal shards most likely came from an abandoned mine half a day's travel to the east. If needed, Mattzog can draw the party a rough map to the location.

Failure: The characters' inaction or bungling has caused them to lose precious time. Night falls and one of the farmhouses is set on fire, mortally wounding a farmhand. Before he dies, he tells the adventurers that he was attacked by kobolds, and he identifies the direction in which they fled. If the party sets out in pursuit, a kobold patrol springs an ambush (see "Kobolds" under "Running the Adventure"). Any of the kobolds can tell the adventurers where the mine is. If all members of the patrol die, at least one kobold has a purple crystal, which Mattzog can identify for the characters, sending the party to the old mine.

The Mine

Kerang and his kobold cohorts have taken up residence in a decrepit mine in the Briar Hills. The kobolds have retrofitted the mine with deadly traps and secret passageways. If captured or fleeing, they do their best to steer intruders into the hazards. The traps below show up at several keyed locations on the map. Disabling a trap at one location does not automatically disable it at all locations. The party must deal with the threats individually.



T1. Tripwire Trap

A tripwire is set 3.5 feet off the ground. Small creatures, such as halflings, gnomes, and kobolds, can pass underneath. The tripwire is made of woven spider silk and is difficult to detect.

Kobold Tripwire	**Level 1 Trap**
Object	XP 100
Detect Perception DC 19	**Initiative** –
HP 1	
AC 12, **Fortitude** 10, **Reflex** 10, **Will** –	
Immune necrotic, poison, psychic, forced movement, all conditions, ongoing damage	

Triggered Actions

Effect ✦ Encounter

Trigger: A Medium or larger creature enters one of the trigger squares.

Effect: Roll 1d4 to select an effect. Once triggered, the trap is disabled until reset.

1. *Bag of Hammers (Opportunity Action):* Close burst 1 (creatures in the burst); +4 vs. Reflex; 1d6 + 3 damage.
2. *Warning Sound:* Pots and pans make a racket as they fall to the ground. A kobold patrol (see "Running the Adventure") comes to investigate.
3. *Hair-Triggered Crossbow (Opportunity Action):* Ranged 5 (one creature); +6 vs. AC; 1d8 + 3 damage.
4. *Swinging Spike (Opportunity Action):* Melee 1 (one creature); +6 vs. AC; 1d8 + 4 damage.

Countermeasures

✦ **Disable:** Thievery DC 19 (standard action). *Requirement:* The character must be adjacent to the trigger square. *Success:* The trigger square no longer functions.

✦ **Reset:** Thievery DC 12 (standard action). *Success:* The triggered trap is reset.

✦ **Spring:** As a standard action, the trap can be sprung safely from a square adjacent to a trigger square.

T2. Covered Pit

A flimsy board is covered in dirt and placed over a shallow spiked pit. Small creatures can run across the board, but the weight of larger creatures breaks it in half.

Covered Pit	**Level 1 Trap**
Object	XP 100
Detect Perception DC 19	**Initiative** –
Immune attacks	

Triggered Actions

Attack ✦ Encounter

Trigger: A Medium or larger creature enters a trigger square.

Attack (Opportunity Action): Melee 1 (each creature in a trigger square); +4 vs. Reflex

Hit: 1d6 + 4 damage, and the target is dazed (save ends). In addition, the target falls prone in a 5-foot-deep pit.

Effect: The pit is opened and no longer hidden.

Countermeasures

✦ **Disable:** Thievery DC 19 (standard action). *Requirement:* The character must be adjacent to the trigger square. *Success:* The trigger square no longer functions.

✦ **Spring:** As a standard action, the trap can be sprung safely from a square adjacent to a trigger square.

T3. Small Tunnels

The kobolds have added tunnels to the mine that better suit them. The tunnels are built to scale for Small creatures. Medium or larger creatures need to squeeze and travel in single file to crawl through the passages.

Captured!

Kerang, the kobolds' dragon master, is eager to lord his power over defeated foes. His minions deliver unconscious characters to Kerang's lair, where they are stripped of all weapons and implements and locked in a large cage. The dragon-brain-in-a-jar harangues the adventurers about his plan to destroy the descendants of his enemies.

Although Kerang never sleeps and his workers constantly move through the lair, captured characters might be able to slip away. Zeta Windsnap could sneak out of her cell and create a diversion to help the party escape. If a character has thieves' tools or a thin piece of metal, the lock on the cage can be picked

with a DC 18 Thievery check. The door could also be smashed open with a DC 20 Athletics check. The adventurers' weapons are in plain sight atop Kerang's hoard beside his altar.

Once the construction of his body is complete, Kerang blasts through the rock wall to escape. The dragon launches into the air while clutching the cage in his iron talons. He immediately heads for the Barony of Harkenwold. Kerang drops the cage on a hilltop facing Dardun and razes the town. This situation is the characters' last chance to escape. Refer to the "Concluding the Adventure" section for further information.

1. Mine Entrance

Combat Encounter Level 1 (500 XP)

The mine entrance is guarded by a stout wooden door and is barred from the inside. Murder holes have been chiseled into the walls on each side of the door.

Light: Bright (sunlight or lanterns).

Monsters: 8 kobold tunnelers, 2 kobold slingers, 1 giant weasel.

When the party can see the area, read:
A pair of rusted iron rails leads to a cavity cut into the mountainside and disappears behind a heavy wooden door. The opening is buttressed with heavy wooden beams. Many small openings are cut into the rock on either side of the door.

Perception DC 19: Light reflects off small pairs of eyes peering through openings in the rock.

If a character looks for another entrance, read:
Directly above the mine entrance, high on the steep rock wall, two metal pipes jut into the air. Corroded metal grates cover the openings.

If the party waits stealthily, the characters see kobold groups enter and exit the mine every few hours from dusk until dawn. The groups use the passphrase "Ha eltak Kerang" ("Hail Kerang" in Draconic) to enter.

1A. Entrance: Iron rails lead through this room and deeper into the tunnels. Refuse litters the floor here; roll twice on the Mundane Items table. The kobolds have fortified this antechamber with a barred door (AC/Fortitude 15, Reflex 5; immune to necrotic, poison, psychic, forced movement, all conditions, and ongoing damage; hp 50). Breaking the door open requires two successful DC 25 Athletics checks. The door can be unbarred as a minor action from inside the room. Murder holes have been cut into the rock around the door.

1B. Ventilation Shaft: Fifty feet above the entrance on a steep rock wall (Athletics DC 15 to climb), two large ventilation pipes are visible. Metal grates cover the shafts, but the locks are brittle and oxidized (Athletics DC 12 to break or Thievery DC 12 to pick). Inside, the shafts have maintenance ladders. Sound is amplified, so a DC 8 Stealth check is required to avoid attracting attention. The shafts open just behind the mine entrance.

8 Kobold Tunnelers **Level 1 Minion Skirmisher**
Small natural humanoid (reptile) XP 25 each

HP 1; a missed attack never damages a minion. **Initiative** +5
AC 15, **Fortitude** 12, **Reflex** 14, **Will** 12 **Perception** +1
Speed 6 Darkvision

Standard Actions

Javelin (weapon) ✦ **At-Will**
Attack: Melee 1 (one creature); +6 vs. AC
Hit: 4 damage.

Javelin (weapon) ✦ **At-Will**
Attack: Ranged 10 (one creature); +6 vs. AC
Hit: 4 damage.

Minor Actions

Shifty ✦ At-Will
Effect: The kobold shifts 1 square.

Triggered Actions

Narrow Escape ✦ Encounter
Trigger: A close or an area attack hits or misses the kobold.
Effect (Immediate Interrupt): The kobold shifts up to 3 squares.

Str 8 (-1)	**Dex** 16 (+3)	**Wis** 12 (+1)
Con 12 (+1)	**Int** 9 (-1)	**Cha** 10 (+0)

Alignment evil **Languages** Common, Draconic
Equipment leather armor, 3 javelins

Giant Weasel **Level 1 Skirmisher**
Medium natural beast XP 100

HP 26; **Bloodied** 13 **Initiative** +5
AC 15, **Fortitude** 12, **Reflex** 14, **Will** 12 **Perception** +1
Speed 7 Low-light vision

Traits

Low Profile
The weasel moves at normal speed while squeezing.

Standard Actions

Bite ✦ At-Will
Attack: Melee 1 (one creature); +6 vs. AC
Hit: 1d8 + 4 damage.

Move Actions

Skitter ✦ At-Will
Effect: The weasel can shift up to half its speed. During this movement, it can move through enemy spaces.

Str 9 (-1)	**Dex** 16 (+3)	**Wis** 12 (+1)
Con 10 (+0)	**Int** 3 (-4)	**Cha** 9 (-1)

Alignment unaligned **Languages** –

2 Kobold Slingers	Level 1 Artillery
Small natural humanoid (reptile)	XP 100 each
HP 24; **Bloodied** 12	**Initiative** +3
AC 13, **Fortitude** 12, **Reflex** 14, **Will** 12	**Perception** +1
Speed 6	Darkvision
Standard Actions	
Dagger (weapon) ✦ **At-Will**	
Attack: Melee 1 (one creature); +8 vs. AC	
Hit: 1d4 + 3 damage.	
Sling (weapon) ✦ **At-Will**	
Attack: Ranged 20 (one creature); +8 vs. AC	
Hit: 1d6 + 5 damage.	
Special Shot (weapon) ✦ **At-Will** (3/encounter)	
Attack: Ranged 20 (one creature); +8 vs. AC	
Hit: 1d6 + 5 damage plus one of the following effects (roll a d6):	
⚀ ⚁ *Stinkpot:* The target takes a -2 penalty to attack rolls (save ends).	
⚂ ⚃ *Firepot* (fire): The target takes ongoing 2 fire damage (save ends).	
⚄ ⚅ *Gluepot:* The target is immobilized (save ends).	
Minor Actions	
Shifty ✦ **At-Will**	
Effect: The kobold shifts 1 square.	
Skills Stealth +8	
Str 9 (-1) **Dex** 17 (+3) **Wis** 12 (+1)	
Con 12 (+1) **Int** 9 (-1) **Cha** 10 (+0)	
Alignment evil **Languages** Common, Draconic	
Equipment leather armor, dagger, sling, 20 sling bullets, 3 rounds of special shot	

Tactics

The kobolds guarding the mine entrance are vigilant. They keep the door barred unless a kobold patrol is passing through. Unless directly targeted by attacks, the guards hide at the murder holes and wait to attack until their enemies approach the door. The last kobold standing flees.

Development

The mine entrance is far enough from the kobold base of operations that the din of battle attracts no attention from other kobolds. If any kobolds flee, they head for the mine carts and try to reach the others.

2. Mine Carts

Combat Encounter Level 2-3 (600-800 XP)

The mine carts stored in this area can be used to travel quickly to the deep mine. If a kobold fled in the last encounter, the characters catch a glimpse of it making a getaway in a mine cart.

Light: Dim light (luminescent crystals).

Monsters: 8 kobold tunnelers and 4 kobold slingers at 2C. A kobold quickblade and giant weasel might join the battle.

As the characters enter 2A, read:

The iron tracks fork here and continue in parallel into a long tunnel. A weathered plaque over the tunnel reads "Deep Mine this way." Dimly glowing purple crystals have been set into the tunnel walls at regular intervals. A pair of mine carts sits on a side track. A metal door is slightly ajar on the south wall.

2A. Cart Storage: Mine carts are stored in the area when not in use. The carts are constructed of thick iron reinforced with riveted steel bands.

2B. Repair Room: A few lengths of iron rail and a mine cart without wheels shows that this room is probably used for maintenance tasks. A search turns up mundane items (roll three times on the Mundane Items table) and a ten-foot wooden pole.

2C. Tunnel to Deep Mine: At the halfway point to the deep mine, kobolds attack the party. Area 2C on the map is an abstraction of a long, descending tunnel that accommodates the mine chase, as described in the "Mine Chase" section.

When the kobolds attack, read:

Suddenly, you hear the piercing squeal of metal on metal from a side tunnel. Four mine carts full of kobolds explode onto the track in a shower of sparks.

8 Kobold Tunnelers	Level 1 Minion Skirmisher
Small natural humanoid (reptile)	XP 25 each
HP 1; a missed attack never damages a minion.	**Initiative** +5
AC 15, **Fortitude** 12, **Reflex** 14, **Will** 12	**Perception** +1
Speed 6	Darkvision
Standard Actions	
Javelin (weapon) ✦ **At-Will**	
Attack: Melee 1 (one creature); +6 vs. AC	
Hit: 4 damage.	
Javelin (weapon) ✦ **At-Will**	
Attack: Ranged 10 (one creature); +6 vs. AC	
Hit: 4 damage.	
Minor Actions	
Shifty ✦ **At-Will**	
Effect: The kobold shifts 1 square.	
Triggered Actions	
Narrow Escape ✦ **Encounter**	
Trigger: A close or an area attack hits or misses the kobold.	
Effect (Immediate Interrupt): The kobold shifts up to 3 squares.	
Str 8 (-1) **Dex** 16 (+3) **Wis** 12 (+1)	
Con 12 (+1) **Int** 9 (-1) **Cha** 10 (+0)	
Alignment evil **Languages** Common, Draconic	
Equipment leather armor, 3 javelins	

4 Kobold Slingers — **Level 1 Artillery**
Small natural humanoid (reptile) — XP 100 each

HP 24; **Bloodied** 12 — **Initiative** +3
AC 13, **Fortitude** 12, **Reflex** 14, **Will** 12 — **Perception** +1
Speed 6 — Darkvision

Standard Actions

Dagger (weapon) ✦ **At-Will**
Attack: Melee 1 (one creature); +8 vs. AC
Hit: 1d4 + 3 damage.

Sling (weapon) ✦ **At-Will**
Attack: Ranged 20 (one creature); +8 vs. AC
Hit: 1d6 + 5 damage.

Special Shot (weapon) ✦ **At-Will** (3/encounter)
Attack: Ranged 20 (one creature); +8 vs. AC
Hit: 1d6 + 5 damage plus one of the following effects (roll a d6):
⚀ ⚁ *Stinkpot:* The target takes a -2 penalty to attack rolls (save ends).
⚂ ⚃ *Firepot* (fire): The target takes ongoing 2 fire damage (save ends).
⚄ ⚅ *Gluepot:* The target is immobilized (save ends).

Minor Actions

Shifty ✦ **At-Will**
Effect: The kobold shifts 1 square.

Skills Stealth +8
Str 9 (-1) **Dex** 17 (+3) **Wis** 12 (+1)
Con 12 (+1) **Int** 9 (-1) **Cha** 10 (+0)
Alignment evil **Languages** Common, Draconic
Equipment leather armor, dagger, sling, 20 sling bullets, 3 rounds of special shot

Kobold Quickblade — **Level 1 Skirmisher**
Small natural humanoid (reptile) — XP 100

HP 29; **Bloodied** 14 — **Initiative** +5
AC 15, **Fortitude** 12, **Reflex** 14, **Will** 12 — **Perception** +1
Speed 6 — Darkvision

Standard Actions

Short Sword (weapon) ✦ **At-Will**
Attack: Melee 1 (one creature); +6 vs. AC
Hit: 1d6 + 3 damage. The attack deals 2 extra damage per square the kobold has shifted since the start of its turn.

Move Actions

Fleet Feet ✦ **At-Will**
Effect: The kobold shifts up to 3 squares.

Minor Actions

Shifty ✦ **At-Will**
Effect: The kobold shifts 1 square.

Skills Athletics +4, Stealth +8, Thievery +8
Str 8 (-1) **Dex** 17 (+3) **Wis** 13 (+1)
Con 13 (+1) **Int** 9 (-1) **Cha** 10 (+0)
Alignment evil **Languages** Common, Draconic
Equipment leather armor, light shield, short sword

Giant Weasel — **Level 1 Skirmisher**
Medium natural beast — XP 100

HP 26; **Bloodied** 13 — **Initiative** +5
AC 15, **Fortitude** 12, **Reflex** 14, **Will** 12 — **Perception** +1
Speed 7 — Low-light vision

Traits

Low Profile
The weasel moves at normal speed while squeezing.

Standard Actions

Bite ✦ **At-Will**
Attack: Melee 1 (one creature); +6 vs. AC
Hit: 1d8 + 4 damage.

Move Actions

Skitter ✦ **At-Will**
Effect: The weasel can shift up to half its speed. During this movement, it can move through enemy spaces.

Str 9 (-1) **Dex** 16 (+3) **Wis** 12 (+1)
Con 10 (+0) **Int** 3 (-4) **Cha** 9 (-1)
Alignment unaligned **Languages** –

Mine Chase

This moving cart battle happens in a part of the mine where the tracks diverge into three sections. The characters start in the center of track 2 with kobolds on each side. The kobolds ride in four carts, each cart holding one kobold slinger and two kobold tunnelers.

Setup: To begin the encounter, place one mine cart of kobolds in the start area on track 1 and another on track 3. When all kobolds in a cart are killed, remove the cart and add another with the same initiative on a random track at the start of the next round. Repeat until all four carts of kobolds have been destroyed. If the characters were pursuing a fleeing kobold, be sure to place it in a mine cart on the track ahead of them.

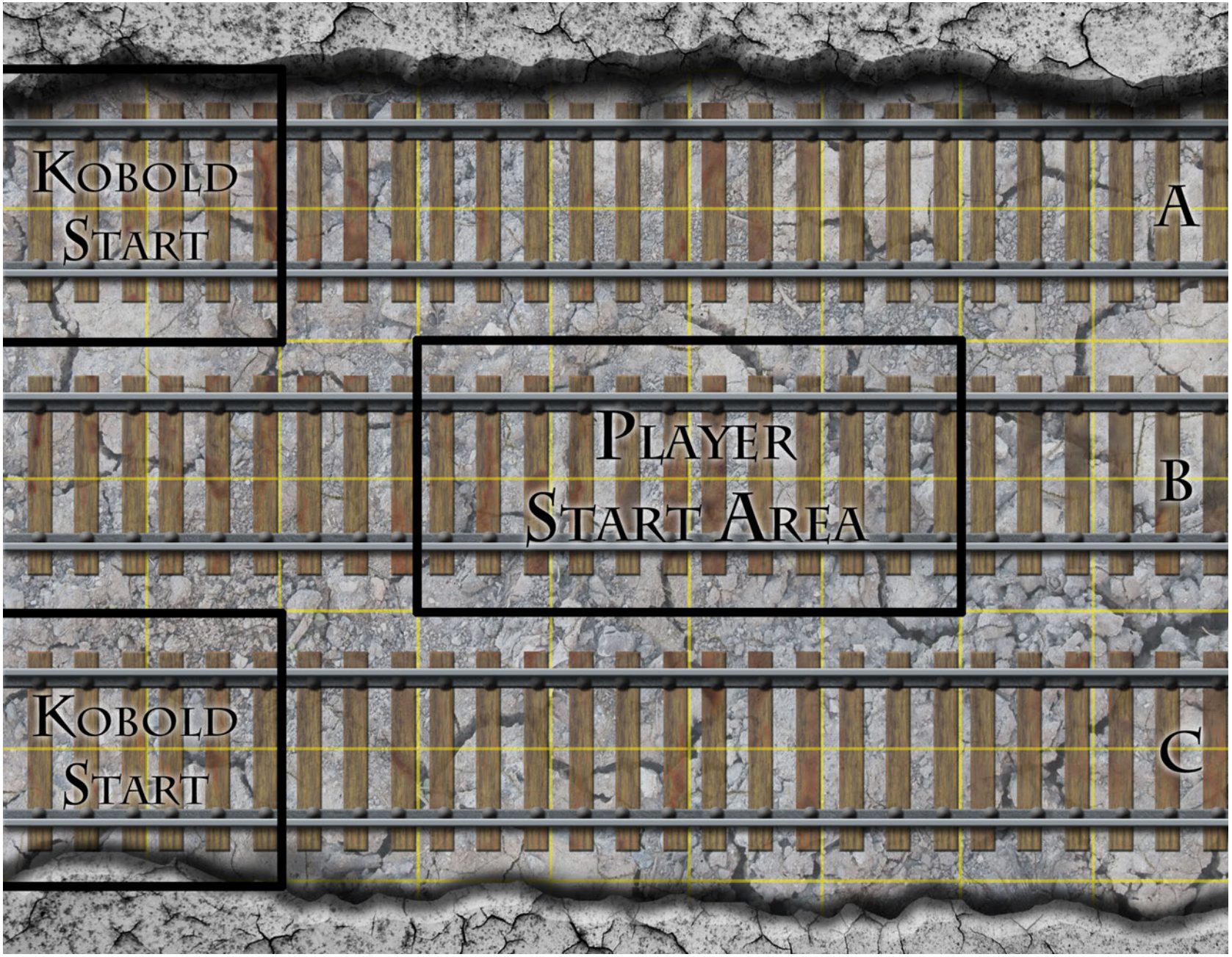
Mine Carts: Large crystals fixed to the front and back give off bright light when the cart is in motion. Each cart measures almost 10 feet square and can accommodate four passengers. The carts roll easily on the tracks and pick up speed quickly in the downward sloping tunnel. The carts have no controls other than simple hand brakes on the fore and aft. A cart offers cover to standing creatures and superior cover to prone creatures.

Moving: The mine carts move at a speed of 6 when rolling downhill. Any combatant in a cart can take a move action to use the following mine cart terrain powers. For the purpose of triggering any attack, moving a mine cart is considered to be forced movement.

Move Actions

Shift Weight
Requirement: The creature must be in one of the affected mine cart's squares.
Effect: The mine cart moves forward 1 square on its track. All creatures in the mine cart move with the terrain.

Apply Brakes
Requirement: The creature must be in one of the affected mine cart's squares.
Effect: The mine cart moves back 1 square on its track. All creatures in the mine cart move with the terrain.


Kobold Start
A
Player Start Area
B
Kobold Start
C

When running this encounter, assume that the mine carts are moving at a constant speed of 6. Rather than moving the carts 6 squares forward every round plus any terrain power movement, track the relative positions of objects on the battlefield. To stay in the fight, a creature on the ground must keep pace with the carts.

Battle Events: At the end of every round, roll a random effect on the Mine Chase Events table. The mine carts cannot change tracks unless indicated by a random event. If you wish, add the quickblade and weasel at some point during the battle.

MINE CHASE EVENTS

d10	Random Event
1	**Hard left.** *Effect:* **All mine carts move one track up if unoccupied space is available.**
2	**Downslope.** *Effect:* **Move mine carts on a random track 4 squares forward on the track.**
3	**Junction switch.** *Effect:* **Until the end of the next round, any creature can use a standard action to move its mine cart (and all riders) to an adjacent unoccupied area of an adjacent track.**
4	**Bats!** *Attack:* **+5 vs. AC (all creatures);** *Hit:* **2 damage.**
5	**Rocks on the track.** *Effect:* **Move mine carts on a random track 4 squares back on the track.**
6	**A kobold quickblade riding a giant weasel enters the battle. Reroll if this random event has already occurred.**
7	**Elevation.** *Effect:* **Until the end of the next round, a random track is elevated by 10 feet.**
8	**Low-hanging beam.** *Attack:* **+3 vs. Reflex (all creatures on a random track).** *Hit:* **The target is dazed until the end of its next turn and falls prone.** *Miss:* **The target falls prone.**
9	**No brakes.** *Effect:* **One hand brake comes loose from a random cart. If both brakes on a cart are gone, it loses the Apply Brakes terrain power.**
10	**Hard right.** *Effect:* **All mine carts move one track down if unoccupied space is available.**

Travel by Foot

Traveling to the deep mine by foot takes roughly ninety minutes. If the characters take the time to explore every side tunnel turnout, they encounter the kobolds at the turnout closest to area 2C. Run the encounter on foot.

If the party marches past the turnout without stopping to explore it, invite the players to roll initiative and place their characters anywhere on the leftmost portion of the map. On the kobolds' initiative count, their mine carts rush down tracks 1 and 3 and screech to a halt at the rightmost portion of the encounter map. All characters standing on a square in track 1 or 3 must succeed on an Acrobatics check (DC 19) or take 1d10 + 4 damage. Those whose check result is 15 or lower also fall prone.

Conclusion

After the encounter, the rest of the trip to the deep mine is uneventful. The tracks lead to the deep mine checkpoint at area 3A.

Using the Mine Track Map

The mine track map on the previous page has been reproduced at the end of the adventure without tags, allowing you to use it as an aid during your game. Feel free to photocopy the page for home game use.

3. Deep Mine Checkpoint

Combat Encounter Level 2 (675 XP)

The first area of the deep mine contains a checkpoint and a storeroom.

Light: Dim light (luminescent crystals).

Monsters: 2 kobold wyrmpriests, 3 kobold dragonshields.

When the party approaches 3A, read:
A barricade of timber and spikes has been set up on the track, blocking mine carts from moving farther. Two side tracks accommodate another mine cart and a handcar.

3A. Guard Post: A spare mine cart and a handcar are located on a side track here. The handcar, operated by two people, can be used to haul up to two mine carts at a time back to the mine entrance. A crude barricade blocks further passage by mine cart.

3B. Chutes and Rock Piles: Behind two 3-foot-high rock piles lurk the kobolds (Perception DC 19 to spot the creatures). If they are not spotted, the kobolds gain a surprise round.

Directly in front of the rock piles are two limestone chutes, each one covered by a stretched tarp and dirt (Perception DC 19 to detect). Any creature stepping on a chute's square must make a saving throw; success means the creature falls prone in the square it left to step into the chute, and failure means a fall into the chute. The creature can attempt a DC 12 Athletics check or Acrobatics check to arrest the fall (a move action) and climb back out of the chute (also a move action). A creature that fails to do so falls to area 8B.

3C. Crystal Pool: Purple crystals line the walls around this pool. Some of the larger crystals can be broken off and use as light sources. Once harvested in this manner, a crystal gives off dim purple light for three months.

3D. Storeroom: The many shelves in this chamber suggest that it was once a storeroom, but almost all the supplies have long since disappeared. Roll three times on the Mundane Items table.

3E. Storage Closet: This enormous closet is filled with trash and empty crates.

2 Kobold Wyrmpriests **Level 3 Artillery (Leader)**
Small natural humanoid (reptile) XP 150 each

HP 36; **Bloodied** 18 **Initiative** +4
AC 17, **Fortitude** 13, **Reflex** 15, **Will** 15 **Perception** +4
Speed 6 Darkvision

Traits

Trap Sense
The kobold has a +2 bonus to all defenses against traps.

Standard Actions

Spear (weapon) ✦ **At-Will**
Attack: Melee 1 (one creature); +8 vs. AC
Hit: 1d8 + 4 damage.

Energy Orb (acid) ✦ **At-Will**
Attack: Ranged 10 (one creature); +8 vs. Reflex
Hit: 2d6 + 4 acid damage.

Dragon Breath (acid) ✦ **Encounter**
Attack: Close blast 3 (creatures in the blast); +6 vs. Fortitude
Hit: 2d6 + 4 acid damage.
Miss: Half damage.

Minor Actions

Shifty ✦ At-Will
Effect: The kobold shifts 1 square.

Incite Faith ✦ Encounter
Effect: Close burst 10 (kobold allies in the burst). The target gains 5 temporary hit points and can shift 1 square as a free action.

Skills Stealth +9, Thievery +9
Str 9 (+0) **Dex** 16 (+4) **Wis** 17 (+4)
Con 12 (+2) **Int** 9 (+0) **Cha** 12 (+2)
Alignment evil **Languages** Common, Draconic
Equipment hide armor, spear, bone mask

3 Kobold Dragonshields **Level 2 Soldier**
Small natural humanoid (reptile) XP 125 each

HP 36; **Bloodied** 18 **Initiative** +4
AC 18, **Fortitude** 14, **Reflex** 13, **Will** 13 **Perception** +2
Speed 5 Darkvision

Standard Actions

Short Sword (weapon) ✦ **At-Will**
Attack: Melee 1 (one creature); +7 vs. AC
Hit: 1d6 + 6 damage.
Effect: The kobold marks the target until the end of the kobold's next turn.

Dirty Tactics (weapon) ✦ **Encounter**
Attack: Melee 1 (one creature); +5 vs. Reflex
Hit: 2d6 + 7 damage, and the target is immobilized until the end of the kobold's next turn.
Miss: Half damage, and the target is slowed until the end of the kobold's next turn.

Minor Actions

Shifty ✦ At-Will
Effect: The kobold shifts 1 square.

Triggered Actions

Dragonshield Tactics ✦ At-Will
Trigger: An enemy adjacent to the kobold shifts, or an enemy moves to a square adjacent to the kobold.
Effect (Immediate Reaction): The kobold shifts 1 square.

Skills Athletics +8, Stealth +7, Thievery +7
Str 14 (+3) **Dex** 13 (+2) **Wis** 12 (+2)
Con 12 (+2) **Int** 9 (+0) **Cha** 10 (+1)
Alignment evil **Languages** Common, Draconic
Equipment scale armor, light shield, short sword

4. Weasel Pen

Combat Encounter Level 1 (500 XP)

The kobolds keep their weasels in a large cage when not on patrol.

Light: Bright light (torches).

Monsters: 2 kobold quickblades, 3 giant weasels.

When the characters enter the room, read:
Whips, leashes, and bridles hang on the wall in this large chamber. Enormous weasels sniff at the air behind a 15-foot-high makeshift pen. Two kobolds are here.

The weasels cannot leave the pen unless someone opens the gate. Each quickblade starts 6 squares from the gate. If the pen is closed, a quickblade rushes over on its turn and opens the gate as a minor action. The weasels then fight alongside the kobolds.

2 Kobold Quickblades	**Level 1 Skirmisher**
Small natural humanoid (reptile)	XP 100 each
HP 29; **Bloodied** 14	**Initiative** +5
AC 15, **Fortitude** 12, **Reflex** 14, **Will** 12	**Perception** +1
Speed 6	Darkvision
Standard Actions	
⊕ **Short Sword** (weapon) ✦ **At-Will**	
Attack: Melee 1 (one creature); +6 vs. AC	
Hit: 1d6 + 3 damage. The attack deals 2 extra damage per square the kobold has shifted since the start of its turn.	
Move Actions	
Fleet Feet ✦ **At-Will**	
Effect: The kobold shifts up to 3 squares.	
Minor Actions	
Shifty ✦ **At-Will**	
Effect: The kobold shifts 1 square.	
Skills Athletics +4, Stealth +8, Thievery +8	
Str 8 (-1) **Dex** 17 (+3) **Wis** 13 (+1)	
Con 13 (+1) **Int** 9 (-1) **Cha** 10 (+0)	
Alignment evil **Languages** Common, Draconic	
Equipment leather armor, light shield, short sword	

3 Giant Weasels	**Level 1 Skirmisher**
Medium natural beast	XP 100 each
HP 26; **Bloodied** 13	**Initiative** +5
AC 15, **Fortitude** 12, **Reflex** 14, **Will** 12	**Perception** +1
Speed 7	Low-light vision
Traits	
Low Profile	
The weasel moves at normal speed while squeezing.	
Standard Actions	
⊕ **Bite** ✦ **At-Will**	
Attack: Melee 1 (one creature); +6 vs. AC	
Hit: 1d8 + 4 damage.	
Move Actions	
Skitter ✦ **At-Will**	
Effect: The weasel can shift up to half its speed. During this movement, it can move through enemy spaces.	
Str 9 (-1) **Dex** 16 (+3) **Wis** 12 (+1)	
Con 10 (+0) **Int** 3 (-4) **Cha** 9 (-1)	
Alignment unaligned **Languages** –	

5. Collapsed Mine

Combat Encounter Level 1 (600 XP)

In the long-forgotten calamity that befell this mine, the passages to this section collapsed. Many miners were trapped here and live on in undead misery.

Light: None.

Monsters: 6 grasping zombies.

Other Creatures: Trapped zombie foreman.

When the characters enter 5A, read:
A rickety wooden elevator platform occupies this room. Rusted iron rungs are anchored into the rock wall, allowing passage to the shaft below. The air is stuffy and full of dust.

Perception DC 15: *A human figure struggles under a fallen support beam to the south.*

When the characters approach 5B, read:
A zombified human corpse in tattered robes is pinned beneath a heavy wooden beam that fell from the ceiling. It hisses and flails around, trying to grab your legs. The creature must have been trapped here for decades. Deep grooves have been carved into the rock floor, and the fingers on the creature's hands have been worn to nubs as it tried to free itself. A wand and purse are cinched to its leather belt.

When the zombies emerge from 5C, read:
Moaning wails and the sounds of shuffling feet break the stillness. A throng of restless undead shambles into view.

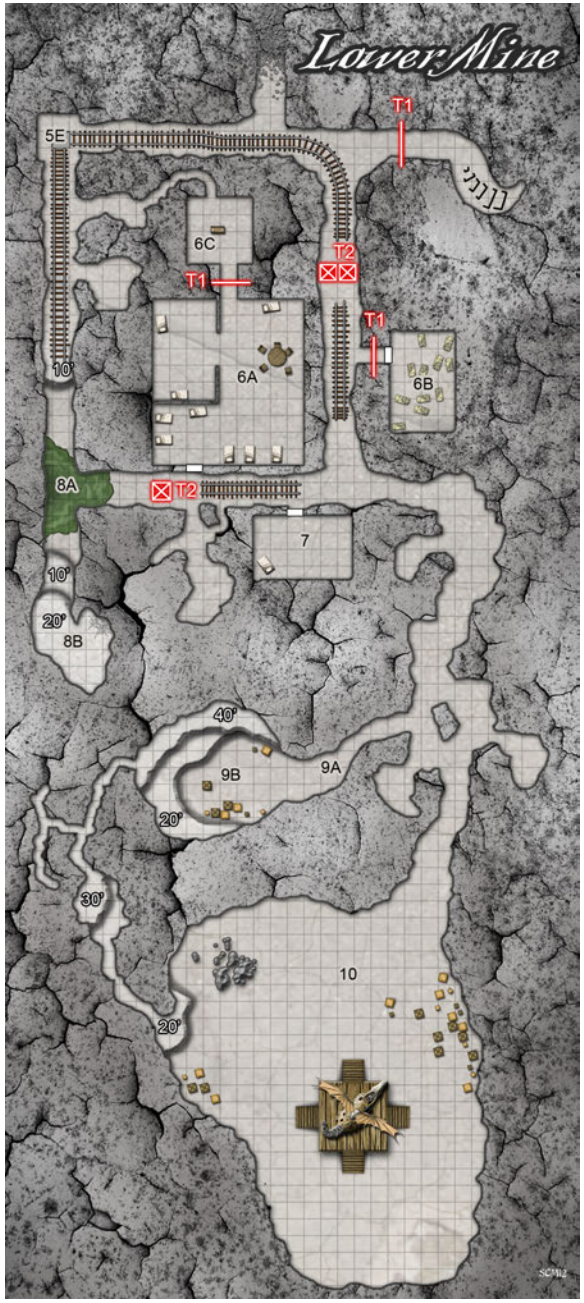
5A. Upper Mine Elevator: Rusted iron rails lead to an elevator platform. Presumably, mine carts were once raised and lowered here, but it's questionable whether the platform could support such weight now. The elevator mechanism is still functional, but excessive weight could cause it to break, dumping its occupants into the 40-foot-deep shaft below. Iron rungs in the wall lead down to area 5E.

5B. Fallen Foreman: This passageway is unremarkable except for a solitary zombie trapped beneath a support beam on the floor. The poor soul was once the mine's foreman. The zombie is considered to be helpless. Noise in this area attracts the attention of the zombies in area 5C.

Treasure: At his waist, the zombie foreman carries a *wand of digging* and a purse containing 27 sp and dried figs. The *wand of digging* is a metal wand tipped with a tiny shovel head. The wand can be used once per day to blast through two 5-foot squares of natural rock. The accompanying explosion can be heard up to 50 squares away.

5C. Ore Deposit: Undead are often drawn to mindlessly carry out the tasks they performed while living. The zombie miners mill around a rich vein of silver ore. There are several high-purity silver deposits on the rock surface. A character with a mining pick could break off five chunks worth 10 gp each. The zombies shamble toward any loud noise in the collapsed mine area.

5D. Cave-In: The ceiling has collapsed in this area. It would take five workers an hour to clear a 5-foot square of debris.



5E. Lower Mine Elevator: Two sets of iron rails converge on a square of recessed floor under a tall shaft. Metal rungs are set in the rock wall. A pictograph is painted low on the wall in white paint. It shows an arrow pointing up next to a skull and crossbones.

6 Grasping Zombies	**Level 1 Brute**
Medium natural animate (undead)	XP 100 each
HP 33; **Bloodied** 16	**Initiative** -1
AC 13, **Fortitude** 14, **Reflex** 11, **Will** 11	**Perception** -1
Speed 4	Darkvision
Immune disease, poison	
Traits	
Zombie Weakness	
A critical hit automatically reduces the zombie to 0 hit points.	
Standard Actions	
⨁ **Slam ✦ At-Will**	
Attack: Melee 1 (one creature); +6 vs. AC	
Hit: 1d12 + 3 damage, or 1d12 + 8 against a grabbed target.	
⨽ **Zombie Grasp ✦ At-Will**	
Attack: Melee 1 (one creature); +4 vs. Reflex	
Hit: 1d6 + 3 damage, and the zombie grabs the target (escape DC 12) if it does not have a creature grabbed.	
Triggered Actions	
Deathless Hunger ✦ Encounter	
Trigger: The zombie is reduced to 0 hit points, but not by a critical hit.	
Effect (No Action): Roll a d20. On a 15 or higher, the zombie is instead reduced to 1 hit point.	
Str 16 (+3) **Dex** 8 (-1) **Wis** 8 (-1)	
Con 13 (+1) **Int** 1 (-5) **Cha** 3 (-4)	
Alignment unaligned **Languages** –	

6. Barracks

Combat Encounter Level 2 (625 XP)

Supply rooms in this area are used as a barracks.

Perception DC 8: You hear loud yipping voices in an argument behind the door.

Light: Bright light (oil lanterns).

Monsters: 2 kobold wyrmpriests, 1 kobold dragonshield, 8 kobold tunnelers.

6A. Main Barracks: Two wyrmpriests argue over who gets to bunk closest to Jiro, the kobold wild mage favored by Kerang. They are surrounded by a few onlookers (one dragonshield and two tunnelers). Jiro's quarters are separated behind a filthy curtain. The kobold wild mage is spending all his time in Kerang's chamber now. If combat breaks out, the six tunnelers in area 6B awake and join the fray.

6B. Bedding Chamber: This room contains six sleeping kobold tunnelers.

6C. Treasure Room: The kobolds refer to this area as their "treasure room." An unlocked wooden chest contains one treasure (DM's discretion).

2 Kobold Wyrmpriests **Level 3 Artillery (Leader)**
Small natural humanoid (reptile) XP 150 each

HP 36; **Bloodied** 18 **Initiative** +4
AC 17, **Fortitude** 13, **Reflex** 15, **Will** 15 **Perception** +4
Speed 6 Darkvision

Traits

Trap Sense
The kobold has a +2 bonus to all defenses against traps.

Standard Actions

Spear (weapon) ✦ **At-Will**
Attack: Melee 1 (one creature); +8 vs. AC
Hit: 1d8 + 4 damage.

Energy Orb (acid) ✦ **At-Will**
Attack: Ranged 10 (one creature); +8 vs. Reflex
Hit: 2d6 + 4 acid damage.

Dragon Breath (acid) ✦ **Encounter**
Attack: Close blast 3 (creatures in the blast); +6 vs. Fortitude
Hit: 2d6 + 4 acid damage.
Miss: Half damage.

Minor Actions

Shifty ✦ **At-Will**
Effect: The kobold shifts 1 square.

Incite Faith ✦ **Encounter**
Effect: Close burst 10 (kobold allies in the burst). The target gains 5 temporary hit points and can shift 1 square as a free action.

Skills Stealth +9, Thievery +9
Str 9 (+0) **Dex** 16 (+4) **Wis** 17 (+4)
Con 12 (+2) **Int** 9 (+0) **Cha** 12 (+2)
Alignment evil **Languages** Common, Draconic
Equipment hide armor, spear, bone mask

Kobold Dragonshield **Level 2 Soldier**
Small natural humanoid (reptile) XP 125

HP 36; **Bloodied** 18 **Initiative** +4
AC 18, **Fortitude** 14, **Reflex** 13, **Will** 13 **Perception** +2
Speed 5 Darkvision

Standard Actions

Short Sword (weapon) ✦ **At-Will**
Attack: Melee 1 (one creature); +7 vs. AC
Hit: 1d6 + 6 damage.
Effect: The kobold marks the target until the end of the kobold's next turn.

Dirty Tactics (weapon) ✦ **Encounter**
Attack: Melee 1 (one creature); +5 vs. Reflex
Hit: 2d6 + 7 damage, and the target is immobilized until the end of the kobold's next turn.
Miss: Half damage, and the target is slowed until the end of the kobold's next turn.

Minor Actions

Shifty ✦ **At-Will**
Effect: The kobold shifts 1 square.

Triggered Actions

Dragonshield Tactics ✦ **At-Will**
Trigger: An enemy adjacent to the kobold shifts, or an enemy moves to a square adjacent to the kobold.
Effect (Immediate Reaction): The kobold shifts 1 square.

Skills Athletics +8, Stealth +7, Thievery +7
Str 14 (+3) **Dex** 13 (+2) **Wis** 12 (+2)
Con 12 (+2) **Int** 9 (+0) **Cha** 10 (+1)
Alignment evil **Languages** Common, Draconic
Equipment scale armor, light shield, short sword

8 Kobold Tunnelers **Level 1 Minion Skirmisher**
Small natural humanoid (reptile) XP 25 each

HP 1; a missed attack never damages a minion. **Initiative** +5
AC 15, **Fortitude** 12, **Reflex** 14, **Will** 12 **Perception** +1
Speed 6 Darkvision

Standard Actions

Javelin (weapon) ✦ **At-Will**
Attack: Melee 1 (one creature); +6 vs. AC
Hit: 4 damage.

Javelin (weapon) ✦ **At-Will**
Attack: Ranged 10 (one creature); +6 vs. AC
Hit: 4 damage.

Minor Actions

Shifty ✦ **At-Will**
Effect: The kobold shifts 1 square.

Triggered Actions

Narrow Escape ✦ **Encounter**
Trigger: A close or an area attack hits or misses the kobold.
Effect (Immediate Interrupt): The kobold shifts up to 3 squares.

Str 8 (-1) **Dex** 16 (+3) **Wis** 12 (+1)
Con 12 (+1) **Int** 9 (-1) **Cha** 10 (+0)
Alignment evil **Languages** Common, Draconic
Equipment leather armor, 3 javelins

7. Holding Cell

Roleplaying Encounter

The kobolds have converted this former office into a prison cell. The sole occupant is Zeta Windsnap, the missing girl from Dardun.

Light: Bright light (oil lantern).

When the characters come near the door, read:
A door with a horizontal slot cut into the center is set into a small alcove ahead. The door is wrapped with a thick chain and locked with a heavy padlock. Suddenly, a frail human hand shoots out through the slot, reaching for you. In a desperate whisper, a young girl's voice says, "Help me! Quick! Please!"

The Cell Door: The lock on the door is a good one (Thievery DC 20 to open), and the door is made of

thick wood (Athletics DC 24 to smash). The sound of smashing the door attracts two kobold patrols.

Zeta knows the guards have a key, and they most recently went somewhere to the south. The kobold wild mage, Jiro, currently holds the key in area 10.

The Missing Girl: Zeta Windsnap is hungry and bruised but in good health. She answers any of the party's questions that she can. See the "Lore" section below.

If freed, the plucky girl asks for a dagger or short sword. The kid's got heart, but she's no warrior. In combat, treat her as a minion (defenses 10; hp 1). If told to return home, she reluctantly leaves the group, but she hides in the woods and rejoins the characters when they emerge from the mine.

Lore: Zeta's brother Kevmar went out alone in search of the night beasts. She followed him and hid in the bushes. When the kobolds attacked Kevmar, she leaped forward and stabbed one of the creatures in the chest, mortally wounding it. The kobolds cut her brother down and beat her severely. That's when she lost consciousness.

When Zeta awoke, she was in a large cavern. Kobolds were everywhere, building a machine bigger than a house. She saw a robed kobold shouting from a pedestal next to a jar almost as big as he was, but she couldn't understand what he was saying. They dragged her to this room, where she's been ever since. The kobolds have not fed her.

8. Slime Pool

Combat Encounter Level 1 (175 XP)

This section of the mine has become flooded after years of neglect. A green slime has taken up residence in the murky waters at the crossroads. The kobolds never visit this cave.

Light: None.

Monsters: 1 green slime.

When the characters approach the area, read:
The passageway follows a gradual decline and eventually becomes submerged. From the edge of the water, you can see the passage levels out and continues, but the murkiness prevents you from seeing how far it goes.

8A. Submerged Passage: The green slime lies in wait under the water's surface ten feet down the submerged passage. If the party lingers at the water's edge for too long, the slime rushes at the combatant closest to the edge. Otherwise, it waits for victims to come to it.

8B. Bone Pit: Anyone who falls down a chute in area 3B drops from a hole in the ceiling into a pile of bones, taking 2d6 damage. The bone pile fills the southern half of the cave.

Green Slime	**Level 4 Lurker**
Medium natural beast (blind, ooze)	XP 175
HP 47; **Bloodied** 23	**Initiative** +9
AC 18, **Fortitude** 17, **Reflex** 17, **Will** 14	**Perception** +2
Speed 4, climb 4	Blindsight 10
Immune blinded, gaze effects; **Resist** 5 acid; **Vulnerable** 5 fire, 5 radiant	
Traits	
Ooze	
While squeezing, the ooze moves at full speed rather than half speed, it doesn't take the -5 penalty to attack rolls, and it doesn't grant combat advantage for squeezing.	
Standard Actions	
⊕ **Slam** (acid) ✦ **At-Will**	
Attack: Melee 1 (one creature); +7 vs. Reflex	
Hit: 5 acid damage, and ongoing 5 acid damage (save ends).	
⸸ **Engulf** (acid) ✦ **At-Will**	
Attack: Melee 1 (one creature); +7 vs. Reflex	
Hit: 1d6 + 3 acid damage, and the slime grabs the target (escape DC 18). Until the grab ends, the target takes ongoing 10 acid damage. Attacks that hit the slime deal half damage to the slime and half damage to a single creature grabbed by the slime.	
Skills Stealth +10	
Str 11 (+2) **Dex** 16 (+5) **Wis** 11 (+2)	
Con 17 (+5) **Int** 1 (-3) **Cha** 1 (-3)	
Alignment unaligned **Languages** –	

9. Cave Fisher Lair

Combat Encounter Level 3 (610 XP)

The high ceiling in this naturally cut cavern once made the room an ideal storage area. Now that cave fishers have taken up residence here, the kobolds avoid this chamber.

Light: None.

Monsters: 2 cave fisher anglers, 10 cave fisher spawn.

When the characters enter 9A, read:
Two wide ledges—one 20 feet high, the other 40 feet high—hug the walls of this tall cave. Dusty chests and wooden containers line the walls, stacked toward the high ceiling. At the far end of the room, the top half of a large crate has been wrenched off.

When the characters come close to 9B, read:
The hay and loose packing material stuffed in the broken crate begin to move. Several pink creatures emerge, chittering as they flop to the floor and skitter toward you.

The cave fishers have nested their spawn in a broken crate. The vigilant parents watch hidden from a rocky ledge above.

9A. Storage Room: Two cave fisher anglers perch on the 20-foot-high ledge overlooking the room. The chests and crates are remnants of the original mining operation. The kobolds have already stripped out the valuable items. The characters can still find many common items such as blankets, picks, shovels, coils of rope, and candles. The containers against the walls are stacked in such a way that a character could run 15 feet (3 squares) up the wall before having to climb the 5 feet (1 square) to the lower ledge.

9B. Crate Nest: The cave fisher spawn are located in a crate here. Under hay and broken eggshells, the cave fishers have crammed a kobold corpse as fodder.

2 Cave Fisher Anglers	Level 3 Lurker
Medium natural beast	XP 150 each
HP 37; **Bloodied** 18	**Initiative** +7
AC 18, **Fortitude** 16, **Reflex** 15, **Will** 14	**Perception** +7
Speed 6, climb 5 (spider climb)	Darkvision
Traits	
Sniper	
Whenever the angler is hidden and misses with a ranged attack, it remains hidden.	
Standard Actions	
⊕ **Pincers ✦ At-Will**	
Attack: Melee 1 (one creature); +8 vs. AC	
Hit: 1d10 + 6 damage.	
Filament Strangle ✦ At-Will	
Attack: Ranged 5 (one creature); +7 vs. Reflex	
Hit: 1d6 + 4 damage, and the angler pulls the target 3 squares. The target is restrained (save ends). The effect also ends if the target teleports or if the target or another creature hits the filament in the target's square. The filament uses the angler's defenses. An attack against the filament deals no damage or effects to the angler. Only one creature can be restrained by this attack at a time. The angler can pull the target vertically, and the target can end the pull suspended in air.	
Sustain Standard: The target takes 1d6 + 4 damage, and the angler pulls the target 3 squares.	
Skills Stealth +8	
Str 16 (+4) **Dex** 15 (+3) **Wis** 12 (+2)	
Con 13 (+2) **Int** 2 (-3) **Cha** 5 (-2)	
Alignment unaligned **Languages** –	

10 Cave Fisher Spawn	Level 2 Minion Brute
Small natural beast	XP 31 each
HP 1; a missed attack never damages a minion.	**Initiative** +2
AC 15, **Fortitude** 13, **Reflex** 14, **Will** 12	**Perception** +0
Speed 5, climb 4 (spider climb)	Darkvision
Standard Actions	
⊕ **Pincers ✦ At-Will**	
Attack: Melee 1 (one creature); +5 vs. AC	
Hit: 6 damage, or 9 against an immobilized, restrained, or helpless target.	
Str 11 (+1) **Dex** 13 (+2) **Wis** 8 (+0)	
Con 11 (+1) **Int** 2 (-3) **Cha** 5 (-2)	
Alignment unaligned **Languages** –	

Development

From the highest ledge, characters can see a back passageway that is not visible from the ground. The passage branches but eventually leads to Kerang's lair.

10. Kerang's Lair

Combat Encounter Level 5 (1,200 XP)

After more than a century in hibernation, Kerang is frantic to be free of his glass prison—the embalming jar that houses his brain.

Light: Bright (oil lanterns).

Monsters: Kerang (kobold dragon construct), Jiro (kobold wild mage), 2 kobold dragonshields, 10 kobold tunnelers.

When the characters can see the area, read:

The passage widens into a gigantic rock cavern filled with scaffolding and stacks of construction materials. An enormous dragon sculpture dominates the center of the room. The sculpture is a mishmash of dragon bone and metal plates, held together with bailing wire, struts, and leather bindings. A huge pair of canvas wings is drawn in close to its back. A cracked dragon skull adorns the top of a long neck studded with metal spikes.

A robed kobold barks orders as a team of kobolds lowers a giant glass jar filled with murky water into a hatch on the dragon sculpture. You see something fat and pale gurgling just below the water's surface as the hatch snaps shut.

When the characters enter battle, read:

The robed kobold spies you and screams (in Draconic), "Intruders! Master, protect us!" The sculpture springs to life. Canvas wings suddenly spread open with a sound like a cracking whip, sending out a gust of wind that knocks several kobolds from their scaffolds.

The dragon construct rears up on its hind legs with a roar that shakes the chamber. "WHO DARES DISTURB KERANG?" A cotter pin shoots from its mooring and makes a pinging sound as it rebounds off the cave wall. The beast's forearms crash back to the earth, squashing a slow-moving kobold to a red pulp.

If the characters succeeded in the "Hot on the Trail" encounter, add:

A large metal breastplate falls from the construct and clatters to the floor, revealing an empty cavity and a detached hose. You have apparently arrived before Kerang's construction was complete.

Kerang's new body stands at the center of the chamber, surrounding by rickety scaffolding. The dragon's trusted follower, Jiro, stands next to the altar, delivering Kerang's orders to the workers.

Development

If the adventurers were successful in the "Hot on the Trail" encounter, Kerang's *breath weapon* does not recharge, and only the effect of *fiery explosion* works. Other than Jiro, the dragon cares little for his minions. Jiro and the other kobolds fight to protect their master to their last breath.

Kobold Dragon Construct **Level 6 Elite Brute**
Large natural animate (dragon, construct) XP 500

HP 176; **Bloodied** 88 **Initiative** +6
AC 18, **Fortitude** 19, **Reflex** 18, **Will** 17 **Perception** +10
Speed 6 Darkvision
Saving Throws +2; **Action Points** 1

Standard Actions

Bite ✦ **At-Will**
Attack: Melee 2 (one creature); +11 vs. AC
Hit: 2d10 + 7 damage.

Claw ✦ **At-Will**
Attack: Melee 2 (one creature); +11 vs. AC
Hit: 1d8 + 4 damage.

Dragon's Fury ✦ **At-Will**
Effect: The construct uses *bite* once and *claw* twice. If both *claw* attacks hit the same target, the target falls prone.

Breath Weapon (fire) ✦ **Recharge** ⚄ ⁞⁞
Attack: Close blast 5 (creatures in the blast); +9 vs. Reflex
Hit: 2d8 + 7 fire damage, and ongoing 5 fire damage (save ends).
Miss: Half damage.

Triggered Actions

Tail Sweep ✦ **At-Will**
Trigger: An enemy leaves a square within 2 squares of the construct.
Attack (Immediate Reaction): Melee 2 (the triggering enemy); +9 vs. Reflex
Hit: 2d6 + 7 damage, and the target falls prone.

Fiery Explosion (fire) ✦ **Encounter**
Trigger: The construct is first bloodied.
Attack (No Action): Close burst 2 (creatures in the burst); +9 vs. Reflex
Hit: 2d8 + 7 fire damage, and ongoing 5 fire damage (save ends).
Miss: Half damage.
Effect: The construct takes ongoing 10 fire damage (save ends) and can no longer use *breath weapon*.
Aftereffect: The construct takes ongoing 5 fire damage (save ends) and can no longer use *breath weapon*.

Str 19 (+7) **Dex** 16 (+6) **Wis** 15 (+5)
Con 18 (+7) **Int** 10 (+3) **Cha** 13 (+4)
Alignment evil **Languages** Common, Draconic

10 Kobold Tunnelers **Level 1 Minion Skirmisher**
Small natural humanoid (reptile) XP 25 each

HP 1; a missed attack never damages a minion. **Initiative** +5
AC 15, **Fortitude** 12, **Reflex** 14, **Will** 12 **Perception** +1
Speed 6 Darkvision

Standard Actions

Javelin (weapon) ✦ **At-Will**
Attack: Melee 1 (one creature); +6 vs. AC
Hit: 4 damage.

Javelin (weapon) ✦ **At-Will**
Attack: Ranged 10 (one creature); +6 vs. AC
Hit: 4 damage.

Minor Actions

Shifty ✦ **At-Will**
Effect: The kobold shifts 1 square.

Triggered Actions

Narrow Escape ✦ **Encounter**
Trigger: A close or an area attack hits or misses the kobold.
Effect (Immediate Interrupt): The kobold shifts up to 3 squares.

Str 8 (-1) **Dex** 16 (+3) **Wis** 12 (+1)
Con 12 (+1) **Int** 9 (-1) **Cha** 10 (+0)
Alignment evil **Languages** Common, Draconic
Equipment leather armor, 3 javelins

Kobold Wild Mage **Level 5 Controller**
Small natural humanoid (reptile) XP 200

HP 62; **Bloodied** 31 **Initiative** +4
AC 17, **Fortitude** 16, **Reflex** 17, **Will** 18 **Perception** +4
Speed 6 Darkvision

Traits

Trap Sense
The kobold has a +2 bonus to all defenses against traps.

Standard Actions

Dagger (weapon) ✦ **At-Will**
Attack: Melee 1 (one creature); +10 vs. AC
Hit: 3d4 + 4 damage.

Wild Surge (implement) ✦ **At-Will**
Attack: Ranged 10 (one creature); +8 vs. Reflex
Hit: 2d8 + 4 damage, and the kobold slides the target up to 2 squares.

Wild Magic (implement) ✦ **At-Will**
Attack: Ranged 10 (one creature); +8 vs. Reflex
Hit: Roll a d4 to determine the effect:
1. *Flame Bolt* (fire): 1d8 + 4 fire damage, and ongoing 5 fire damage (save ends).
2. *Frost Bolt* (cold): 2d6 + 4 cold damage, and the target is immobilized (save ends).
3. *Lightning Arc* (lightning): 1d8 + 4 lightning damage, and the target is dazed (save ends).
4. *Venom Bolt* (poison): 1d6 + 4 poison damage, and ongoing 5 poison damage and the target is slowed (save ends both).

Minor Actions

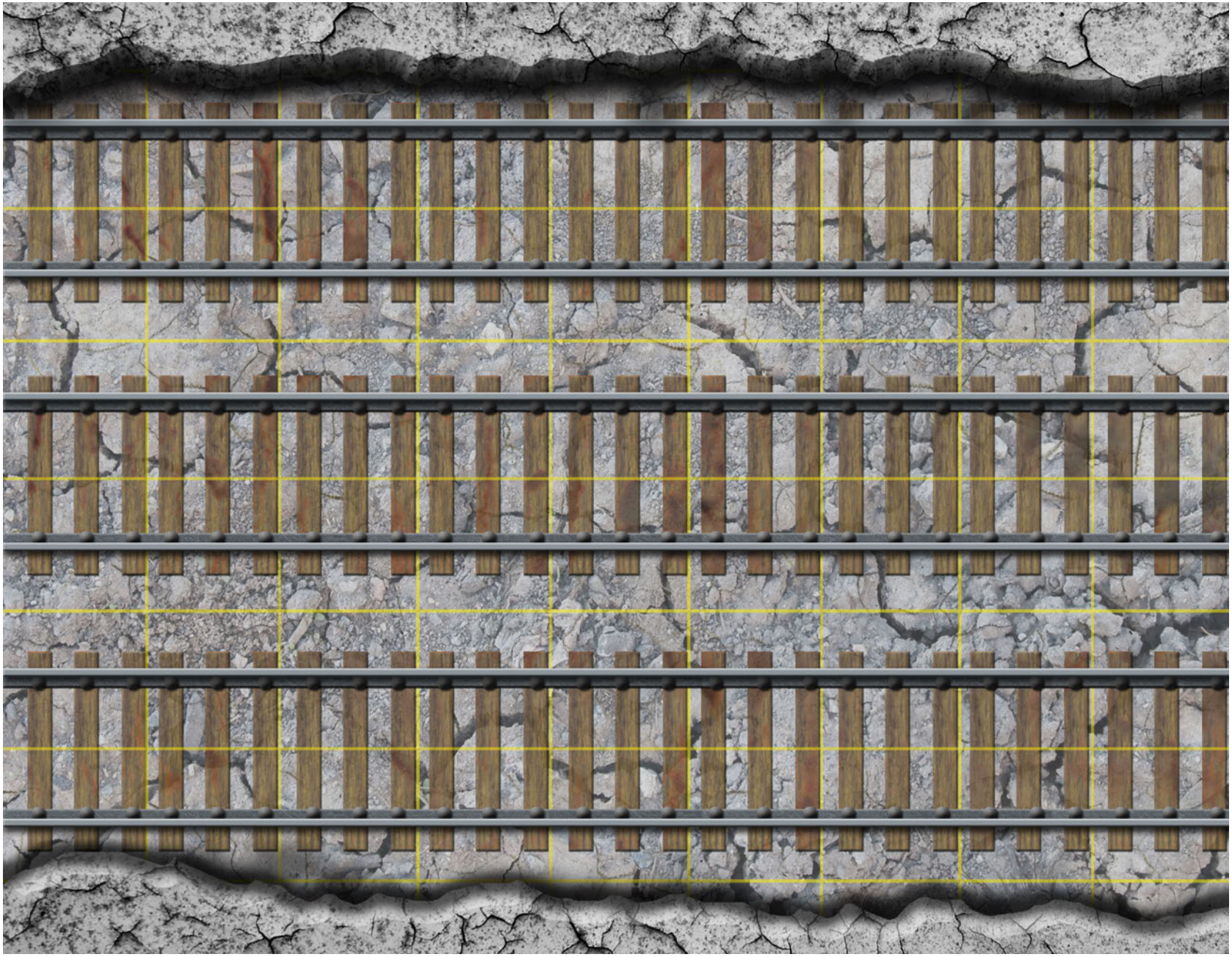
Shifty ✦ **At-Will**
Effect: The kobold shifts 1 square.

Triggered Actions

Wild Blast (cold, fire, lightning) ✦ **Encounter**
Trigger: The kobold drops to 0 hit points.
Attack (No Action): Close burst 2 (creatures in the burst); +8 vs. Reflex
Hit: 2d6 + 5 cold, fire, and lightning damage.

Wild Teleport (teleportation) ✦ **Encounter**
Trigger: The kobold takes damage.
Effect (Immediate Reaction): The kobold teleports 1d6 squares.

Skills Arcana +10, Stealth +9
Str 11 (+2) **Dex** 15 (+4) **Wis** 15 (+4)
Con 14 (+4) **Int** 16 (+5) **Cha** 16 (+5)
Alignment evil **Languages** Common, Draconic
Equipment robes, dagger, wand



2 Kobold Dragonshields	Level 2 Soldier
Small natural humanoid (reptile)	XP 125 each
HP 36; **Bloodied** 18	**Initiative** +4
AC 18, **Fortitude** 14, **Reflex** 13, **Will** 13	**Perception** +2
Speed 5	Darkvision
Standard Actions	
⊕ **Short Sword** (weapon) ✦ **At-Will**	
Attack: Melee 1 (one creature); +7 vs. AC	
Hit: 1d6 + 6 damage.	
Effect: The kobold marks the target until the end of the kobold's next turn.	
⸸ **Dirty Tactics** (weapon) ✦ **Encounter**	
Attack: Melee 1 (one creature); +5 vs. Reflex	
Hit: 2d6 + 7 damage, and the target is immobilized until the end of the kobold's next turn.	
Miss: Half damage, and the target is slowed until the end of the kobold's next turn.	
Minor Actions	
Shifty ✦ **At-Will**	
Effect: The kobold shifts 1 square.	
Triggered Actions	
Dragonshield Tactics ✦ **At-Will**	
Trigger: An enemy adjacent to the kobold shifts, or an enemy moves to a square adjacent to the kobold.	
Effect (Immediate Reaction): The kobold shifts 1 square.	
Skills Athletics +8, Stealth +7, Thievery +7	
Str 14 (+3) **Dex** 13 (+2) **Wis** 12 (+2)	
Con 12 (+2) **Int** 9 (+0) **Cha** 10 (+1)	
Alignment evil **Languages** Common, Draconic	
Equipment scale armor, light shield, short sword	

Concluding the Adventure

Once the adventurers have defeated Kerang, any kobolds remaining in the mine slink away into the countryside. Jiro has a key that can be used to unlock Zeta Windsnap's cell. If the characters released her earlier, Zeta is hiding in the bushes outside the mine, waiting to lead the party back to the village. When the characters return to Dardun, the residents cook a grand feast in their honor and beg to hear the tale of the adventure.

If the characters were captured by Kerang and later escaped, the kobolds continue to fortify the mine and hold Zeta Windsnap captive. To complete the "Justice for Kevmar" quest, the characters must clear out the kobolds room by room.

If the adventurers decide not to pursue Kerang at all, the dragon arrives in Dardun four days later and razes the town. He continues to fortify his stronghold while launching attacks against the surrounding lands.

If you enjoyed this adventure, here are some ideas to continue the story.

- Upon her return to Dardun, the grateful Zeta Windsnap gives the party a pilfered scroll tube containing a treasure map.
- After Jiro is slain, a letter scrawled in Draconic is discovered. The letter is addressed to Jiro from a kobold who has successfully united the kobold tribes beyond the Briar Hills. The joined tribes are heading to the Barony of Harkenwold, as Kerang requested. The letter is dated one week ago.
- Before Zeta returns to town, her father passes away from despair. Mattzog Belluc asks the adventurers to escort the orphan to her uncle's house in Fallcrest. During that journey, the party is ambushed by kobolds from the Cloak Wood, hell-bent on revenge after learning of their cousins' defeat in the Briar Hills.

About the Author

Jobe Bittman is a beaten and half-starved scribe-slave pressed into service by a sadistic demon prince. His work has appeared in publications by Wizards of the Coast, Goodman Games, and Open Design. Please send meat.

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Captain Slygo's Treasure

A D&D® adventure for characters of levels 2–4

By Timothy Ide

Illustrations by Eric Belisle

Cartography by Mike Schley

For the past year, trade along the Silverwrack Coast has suffered from the attacks of a goblin pirate known as Captain Slygo. Fisherfolk have been particularly hard-hit by Captain Slygo and his ship, the *Red Cutter*. Of late, however, Slygo's piracy has moved from high-seas robbery to maritime murder, and the adventurers are called on to settle the score.

"Captain Slygo's Treasure" is a Dungeons & Dragons® adventure for characters of levels 2–4.

Background

The pirate raids on the Silverwrack Coast have reached a deadly apex. Looted and empty fishing boats drift past port towns and harbors. Other craft are set afire and crashed into shore, full of dead bodies. The latest outrage occurred when the seafaring goblins raided the town of Mastwick two weeks ago, making off with everything they could carry and killing many people.

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Enough is enough, and the council of Mastwick is now calling out for heroes to wipe out the pirates. The council can loan a small vessel to the adventurers, crewed by local mariners willing to serve in exchange for a cut in any treasure recovered from Slygo's hoard.

Tracking down the pirates is the only obstacle. Luckily for the adventurers, a number of bottles have been recovered while they were floating in the sea or after they were washed ashore, and each bottle contains a map to the pirates' base: Blood Anchor Island. What no one realizes, however, is that the goblin pirate Slygo is the creator of the maps. For the past month, he has been sailing around in a small boat, dropping his maps-in-bottles into the sea in the hope that someone will find them.

Slygo was recently deposed by Granack—an ambitious hobgoblin with bugbear muscle and a conniving imp to back him up. The hobgoblin, with the imp spurring him on, is responsible for the atrocities along the Silverwrack Coast. Abandoned and betrayed, the bitter Captain Slygo seeks revenge against Granack and the recovery of his hidden treasure hoard.

Adventure Synopsis

To deal with the pirate threat, the adventurers must first sail to Blood Anchor Island. After coming ashore, they explore the port town, Granack's lair, and the secret valley where Slygo's treasure is buried. The inhabitants of the island include a large number of goblin pirates, mostly encountered at the port, as well as bugbears and hobgoblins at Granack's lair. Additionally, savage lizardfolk live in the secret valley, and they take a dim view of trespassers and treasure hunters.

Adventure Hooks

Any of the following hooks might be sufficient to motivate the characters.

- **Mercenary Interest:** Mastwick's council has sent notices and messages to outlying communities seeking adventurers willing to face pirates with the possibility of recovering pirate treasure.
- **Rescue:** Merchant Drago Holt's son, Harno, vanished after the merchant vessel he was traveling aboard ran afoul of the pirates. Drago holds out hope that Harno was taken captive, although no ransom demands have been made. The merchant offers a generous 500 gp for any news of his son, plus 1,000 gp for Harno's safe return.
- **Treasure:** In addition to all the talk of the Silverwrack Coast's pirate problem, rumors abound of a treasure buried on the island the maps depict. (Slygo is the source of the rumor as well.)

Mastwick

Before the pirate raid, Mastwick was a steadily growing community whose prosperity was fueled by increasing overseas trade. Today, that prosperity hangs by a thread.

When the characters arrive in Mastwick, read:
Mastwick is a small town surrounded on all sides by a wooden stockade ten feet in height. A steady trickle of grim-faced people are leaving the town, some riding carts or wagons loaded up with their possessions, others taking only what they can carry. Two sorry-looking guards stand watch outside the main gate.

Beyond the gates, the mood is somber. The streets are lined with empty shops and houses, some boarded up. The remaining citizens are going about their business, looking up occasionally to glare sourly at the people leaving.

Three buildings of note stand in the center of town: the Temple of Pelor, the meeting hall, and a tall square tower that houses Mastwick's small garrison. Bunches of flowers are laid against the tower's walls—tributes to those fallen in the recent pirate raid.

By questioning the townsfolk to find out more about what has happened, the adventurers learn the following information.

- The raiders were goblins that attacked from the sea. When they came ashore, total mayhem broke out. Many citizens were killed or kidnapped, and several buildings were destroyed, mainly down on the wharf.
- The raiders stole mostly supplies such as food, shipping gear, and alcohol. The captives they took numbered twenty-nine citizens in all.
- Goblins of all sizes were seen among the pirate crew, including big ones (bugbears), runty ones (goblins), and well-armed human-sized ones (hobgoblins).
- The pirates' leader is well known along the coast as Slygo. He was seen during the raid—a tall, red-skinned goblin in armor and a large black hat. (This was actually Granack.)
- The town guard arrived late on the scene because of poor organization. When the guards arrived, the goblins quickly routed them, leaving many dead on the wharf.

A meeting can be arranged with Mastwick's leader, Elder Malden. She is a short, thin human female in her early fifties with cropped white hair. She dresses in long merchant's robes and is brusque and businesslike. If the adventurers haven't contacted Elder Malden within an hour of their arrival, she tracks them down personally with her two bodyguards in tow. She then invites them to join her at the meeting hall to discuss matters in private.

Malden asks the characters to sit with her at the council table, upon which are set four glass bottles and four scrolls that she shows to the adventurers. (At this point, provide the players with a copy of the maps at the end of this adventure.) On one side of each scroll is a map of Blood Anchor Island showing an X with the misspelled word "treasur." On the other side is a map showing the route to Blood Anchor Island from the Silverwrack Coast.

All the maps in all the bottles are the same and are clearly drawn by the same hand.

When the players have seen the maps, read:

Elder Malden frowns. "For the past year, Captain Slygo has targeted our trade up and down the Silverwrack Coast, but he was more of a nuisance than anything else. He killed one or two people in the early days and then contented himself more with robbery than murder. Recently, though, he has drastically changed the game.

"In the past three months, two fishing boats have gone missing along the coast, and three other boats have been found floating adrift, stripped of valuables and full of sailors put to the sword. Two more boats have been set afire and were sent drifting ashore, also laden with dead crew. A few survivors speak of being boarded by large goblins, which stole everything and took as prisoners those crew members they did not kill. Just last week, Slygo and his goblin scum paid a visit to Mastwick, inflicting terrible destruction.

"We've sent out coastal patrols before, but they've never been able to track this villain down. Then, all of a sudden, these bottles started turning up, washed ashore or floating in the sea. We don't know who's making these maps, but it could be that a prisoner of the pirates has found a way to get this information to us.

"I have taken the liberty of recruiting a small crew and acquiring a vessel for an expedition to Blood Anchor Island, with seasoned adventurers leading it. You should find the crew and vessel adequate for your needs."

The impoverished town has no coin with which to pay the adventurers, but Malden promises that any pirate booty the adventurers find is theirs to keep.

MAJOR QUEST: END THE SCOURGE
3rd-Level Major Quest (250 XP/character)
The adventurers complete this quest if they kill Granack and end the murderous pirate captain's raids on the Silverwrack Coast.

The Fortune Star

The ship that Elder Malden has selected is a solidly built carrack named the *Fortune Star*. Its female human captain, Ralfine Tancred, is a weather-beaten old salt with a wooden leg. Her navigator husband, Jev Tancred, has already plotted a course to Blood Anchor Island based on the information given in the bottled maps.

Captain Tancred originally had eight crew, but five of them were burned alive in the tavern during the Mastwick raid. Her three remaining sailors are Galen, Merek, and Voral.

Eight new recruits, claiming to be experienced sailors from Owlston, recently volunteered to sail with the *Fortune Star*. Allan Colgrave, a ginger-bearded, beer-bellied human male in his early forties, is their leader. Colgrave has agreed to be Tancred's first mate on the voyage.

Unknown to Elder Malden and Captain Tancred, Colgrave and his crew are greedy scalawags. After finding one of Slygo's maps themselves, they are keen to get their hands on whatever the treasure might be. Not having a ship of their own, they would rather let others lead the mission, then rob them later on.

Captain Tancred has misgivings about Colgrave and his sailors, but she knows that beggars can't be choosers. She doesn't yet suspect Colgrave's crew of being criminals, but their insolence irritates her.

Tancred has already been paid by the town for the mission. Nevertheless, she and her crew feel entitled to a share (as if the whole crew were one character) of any treasure taken from the pirates, to be divided among them.

If you need statistics for the crew, use the following statistics blocks. Colgrave is a Raven Roost cutthroat, but a companion version of his character is also provided. Letting one of the players initially play the companion version of Colgrave is a good way to keep his duplicity under wraps. The seedy sailor holds back on his special attacks to keep them secret unless his life is threatened. If this happens, you should take control of him. The sailors are human goons, except that they use short swords rather than clubs.

Captain Ralfine Tancred	**Level 4 Leader**
Medium natural humanoid, human	
HP 45; **Bloodied** 22; **Healing Surges** 10	**Initiative** +2
AC 19, **Fortitude** 18, **Reflex** 16, **Will** 17	**Perception** +8
Speed 6	
Standard Actions	
⊕ **Longsword** (weapon) ✦ **At-Will**	
Attack: Melee 1 (one creature); +11 vs. AC	
Hit: 1d8 + 4 damage.	
➢ **Crossbow** (weapon) ✦ **At-Will**	
Attack: Ranged 15/30 (one creature); +10 vs. AC	
Hit: 1d8 + 2 damage.	
Leading Maneuver ✦ **Encounter**	
Effect: Ralfine moves up to her speed and makes a basic attack, and then one ally within 5 squares of her can charge or make a basic attack as a free action.	
Minor Actions	
Captain's Favor ✦ **Encounter**	
Effect: An ally that can hear Ralfine and is within 5 squares of her gains 15 temporary hit points.	
Skills Athletics +9	
Str 14 (+4) **Dex** 11 (+2) **Wis** 12 (+3)	
Con 18 (+6) **Int** 13 (+3) **Cha** 15 (+4)	
Alignment good **Languages** Common	
Equipment leather armor, longsword, crossbow, 20 bolts	

Navigator Jev Tancred **Level 4 Striker**
Medium natural humanoid, human

HP 40; **Bloodied** 20; **Healing Surges** 7 **Initiative** +5
AC 19, **Fortitude** 16, **Reflex** 18, **Will** 17 **Perception** +9
Speed 6

Standard Actions

⊕ **Short Sword** (weapon) ✦ **At-Will**
Attack: Melee 1 (one creature); +11 vs. AC
Hit: 1d6 + 4 damage, or 2d6 + 4 if the target is granting combat advantage to Jev.

➳ **Crossbow** (weapon) ✦ **At-Will**
Attack: Ranged 15/30 (one creature); +10 vs. AC
Hit: 1d8 + 5 damage, or 2d8 + 5 if the target has no cover and no other creature is adjacent to the target.

Skills Nature +9
Str 15 (+4) **Dex** 17 (+5) **Wis** 14 (+4)
Con 13 (+3) **Int** 11 (+2) **Cha** 12 (+3)
Alignment good **Languages** Common
Equipment leather armor, short sword, crossbow, 20 bolts

Human Goon **Level 2 Minion Soldier**
Medium natural humanoid, human XP 31

HP 1; a missed attack never damages a minion. **Initiative** +3
AC 15, **Fortitude** 13, **Reflex** 11, **Will** 11 **Perception** +2
Speed 6

Traits

Mob Rule
While at least two other human goons are within 5 squares of the goon, it gains a +2 power bonus to all defenses.

Standard Actions

⊕ **Club** (weapon) ✦ **At-Will**
Attack: Melee 1 (one creature); +7 vs. AC
Hit: 5 damage.

Str 14 (+3) **Dex** 11 (+1) **Wis** 12 (+2)
Con 12 (+2) **Int** 9 (+0) **Cha** 13 (+2)
Alignment unaligned **Languages** Common
Equipment club

Raven Roost Cutthroat **Level 5 Lurker**
Medium natural humanoid, human XP 200

HP 49; **Bloodied** 24 **Initiative** +11
AC 19, **Fortitude** 16, **Reflex** 19, **Will** 16 **Perception** +9
Speed 6

Standard Actions

⊕ **Dagger** (weapon) ✦ **At-Will**
Attack: Melee 1 (one creature); +10 vs. AC
Hit: 3d4 + 6 damage.

⸸ **Garrote** (weapon) ✦ **At-Will**
Requirement: The cutthroat must not be grabbing a creature.
Attack: Melee 1 (one creature); +8 vs. Reflex
Hit: The target is grabbed (escape DC 22) until the end of the cutthroat's next turn. Until the grab ends, the cutthroat has superior cover, and neither it nor the target can be pulled, pushed, or slid.

⸸ **Arterial Cut** (weapon) ✦ **At-Will**
Effect: Melee 1 (one creature grabbed by the cutthroat). The target takes 2d10 + 5 damage, and ongoing 10 damage (save ends). The grab then ends.

Triggered Actions

⸸ **Quick Cut** ✦ **At-Will**
Trigger: An enemy escapes the cutthroat's grab.
Effect (Immediate Interrupt): The cutthroat uses *dagger* against the triggering enemy.

Skills Athletics +9, Stealth +12
Str 14 (+4) **Dex** 20 (+7) **Wis** 14 (+4)
Con 13 (+3) **Int** 10 (+2) **Cha** 6 (+0)
Alignment evil **Languages** Common
Equipment studded leather, dagger, garrote

Allan Colgrave **Level 5 Striker**
Medium natural humanoid, human

HP 49; **Bloodied** 24; **Healing Surges** 7 **Initiative** +7
AC 19, **Fortitude** 16, **Reflex** 19, **Will** 16 **Perception** +9
Speed 6

Standard Actions

⊕ ➳ **Dagger** (weapon) ✦ **At-Will**
Attack: Melee 1 or Ranged 10 (one creature); +11 vs. AC
Hit: 1d4 + 7 damage, or 3d4 + 7 if the target is granting combat advantage to Colgrave.

Skills Athletics +9, Stealth +12
Str 14 (+4) **Dex** 20 (+7) **Wis** 14 (+4)
Con 13 (+3) **Int** 10 (+2) **Cha** 6 (+0)
Alignment unaligned **Languages** Common
Equipment studded leather, dagger

The Voyage

The voyage to Blood Anchor Island takes three days, just as the map says. For the purpose of this adventure, the winds and weather are favorable. In addition, the *Fortune Star* is equipped with sweep oars and can be rowed if it is ever becalmed.

The Red Cutter Attacks

Combat Encounter Level 5 (1,028 XP)

The *Red Cutter* is heading out to the Silverwrack Coast, on the lookout for plunder. The ship's course takes it directly into the path of the *Fortune Star* when the adventurers are a half-day away from Blood Anchor Island.

Light: Daylight.

Monsters: Lieutenant Borkel (hobgoblin warmonger), 3 bugbear thugs, 6 hobgoblin grunts.

The crew of goblin cutters attacks those other than the adventurers, so their numbers and experience point totals are reflected in the encounter as if the characters face up to five cutters.

Other Creatures: The crew of the *Fortune Star*.

When you're ready to start, read:

Far off in the distance, a dark speck quickly grows to reveal itself as another ship, perhaps a trading vessel making its way toward Mastwick or Owlston. But as you draw closer, you see the sun glint off crimson sails and the vessel's black flag—adorned with a red goblin skull.

From the crow's nest, Jev shouts out. "It's the Red Cutter*!" As the ship bears down on the* Fortune Star*, you see a horde of goblins, hobgoblins, and bugbears on deck, all of them screaming for blood.*

Boarding Action

Captain Granack's second-in-command, Borkel, is currently helming the *Red Cutter* and is anxious to prove himself. Borkel's approach is simple and direct—when he spots a target ship, he sails straight for it. The *Red Cutter* is faster than its prey, so a confrontation is inevitable. The ship-to-ship battle proceeds as follows.

- Roll initiative.
- **Rounds 1 and 2:** As the *Red Cutter* closes in on the *Fortune Star* in preparation for boarding, both crews can make ranged or area attacks against one another. Unless the characters aim at specific targets, such attacks target up to 1d3 goblin cutters. The ships are 15 squares apart (bow to bow) at the start of round 1 and 10 squares apart at the start of round 2.
- **Round 3:** The two ships begin this round side by side and 5 squares apart. The *Red Cutter*'s hobgoblin grunts hurl grappling lines at the *Fortune Star* and begin pulling the two ships together.
- **Round 4:** The grappled ships are 2 squares apart. The crews begin boarding actions using planks or by jumping from ship to ship.

Ship Features

On both ships, the main deck is 8 feet above sea level. The foredeck and the poop deck are each 8 feet above the main deck.

Cover: A creature on the deck of either ship can gain partial cover against ranged attacks from rigging, sails, and other maritime paraphernalia.

Rigging: The rigging can be climbed with a DC 10 Athletics check.

Overboard: A creature knocked into the sea can climb back onto one of the ships by scaling the slippery hull. With the aid of a rope, the task requires a DC 5 Athletics check (DC 20 without a rope).

Swinging on Ropes: Swinging on a rope is a move action. A swinging creature moves up to its speed to a square of the same or lower elevation than the square in which it started. A swinging creature's movement provokes opportunity attacks only for leaving its initial square. Swinging can be used to charge.

Red Cutter Tactics

Borkel, the bugbear thugs, and the hobgoblin grunts recognize the adventurers as a serious threat. Borkel stays aboard the *Red Cutter* and uses *longbow* and *battle cry*, while the thugs and grunts engage in melee on the deck of either ship. The hobgoblins stay close together to gain the benefit of *phalanx soldier*.

The goblin cutters board the *Fortune Star* and attack Captain Tancred and her crew. If the characters board the *Red Cutter*, a few goblin cutters might step up to slow them down.

The remaining goblins surrender if Granack and the bugbears fall.

Fortune Star Tactics

Captain Tancred, Jev, and the human sailors repel the goblin boarders while the adventurers deal with the bugbears and hobgoblins. Allen Colgrave and his crew join the battle against the goblins, but they fight defensively (Insight DC 20 to notice this fact). Describe the battle narratively, with the fortunes of the secondary characters hinging on the adventurers' success.

If the characters win, the crew repels the goblins. The battle claims the lives of two sailors and one scalawag. Captain Tancred, Jev Tancred, and Allen Colgrave survive with minor injuries. If the characters lose the battle, three sailors and one scalawag are killed, and all other survivors are taken prisoner.

If the characters and crew are taken prisoner, the *Red Cutter* returns to Blood Anchor Island at once. Borkel recognizes the potential ransom value of the adventurers and has them taken to the Smashed Skull Tavern while he goes to report to Granack. Captain Slygo discovers the characters there and offers to aid their escape if they promise to help him.

Alternatively, the characters might try to bribe or negotiate with their guard (the bouncer, Grokk), or attempt to start a brawl among the tavern's unruly patrons to cover their escape. In any event, their confiscated gear is secured in a trunk under the bar.

3 Bugbear Thugs **Level 4 Brute**
Medium natural humanoid XP 175 each

HP 65; **Bloodied** 32 **Initiative** +7
AC 16, **Fortitude** 15, **Reflex** 15, **Will** 11 **Perception** +8
Speed 6 Low-light vision

Traits

Bushwhack
The bugbear gains a +4 bonus to attack rolls against a creature that has no allies adjacent to it.

Standard Actions

⊕ **Morningstar** (weapon) ✦ **At-Will**
Attack: Melee 1 (one creature); +9 vs. AC
Hit: 2d8 + 6 damage, or 3d8 + 6 if the bugbear has combat advantage against the target.

Handaxe (weapon) ✦ **At-Will**
Attack: Ranged 10 (one creature); +9 vs. AC
Hit: 1d6 + 6 damage.

Skills Stealth +12
Str 20 (+7) **Dex** 20 (+7) **Wis** 13 (+3)
Con 15 (+4) **Int** 8 (+1) **Cha** 10 (+2)
Alignment evil **Languages** Common, Goblin
Equipment leather armor, morningstar, 2 handaxes

EXPANDING THE FIGHT

If you like, you can run the fight as a larger melee that involves both full crews. To do so, include twenty goblin cutters and three goblin sharpshooters (see the statistics in the Town Watch encounter). Let the players run the crew of the *Fortune Star*, using the companion version of Allan Colgrave. The XP awarded for the fight doesn't change.

Hobgoblin Warmonger **Level 4 Artillery (Leader)**
Medium natural humanoid XP 175

HP 46; **Bloodied** 23 **Initiative** +6
AC 18, **Fortitude** 15, **Reflex** 17, **Will** 16 **Perception** +4
Speed 6 Low-light vision

Standard Actions

⊕ **Mace** (weapon) ✦ **At-Will**
Attack: Melee 1 (one creature); +9 vs. AC
Hit: 1d8 + 6 damage.

Longbow (weapon) ✦ **At-Will**
Attack: Ranged 30 (one creature); +11 vs. AC
Hit: 1d10 + 7 damage, and the target grants combat advantage until the start of the hobgoblin's next turn.

Battle Cry (charm) ✦ **Recharge** when first bloodied
Attack: Area burst 1 within 10 (enemies in the burst); +9 vs. Will
Hit: The target makes a basic attack as a free action against a creature of the hobgoblin's choice.
Effect: Each ally in the burst can charge or make a basic attack as a free action. If an ally hits with the attack granted by this power, that ally gains 5 temporary hit points.

Move Actions

Phalanx Movement ✦ **At-Will**
Effect: The hobgoblin and each ally adjacent to it can shift 1 square as a free action. The allies must end adjacent to the hobgoblin.

Str 15 (+4) **Dex** 19 (+6) **Wis** 14 (+4)
Con 16 (+5) **Int** 11 (+2) **Cha** 17 (+5)
Alignment evil **Languages** Common, Goblin
Equipment chainmail, mace, longbow, 20 arrows

6 Hobgoblin Grunts **Level 3 Minion Soldier**
Medium natural humanoid XP 38 each

HP 1; a missed attack never damages a minion. **Initiative** +5
AC 19, **Fortitude** 18, **Reflex** 16, **Will** 15 **Perception** +2
Speed 6 Low-light vision

Traits

Phalanx Soldier
While at least one hobgoblin ally is adjacent to the grunt, it gains a +2 bonus to AC.

Standard Actions

⊕ **Longsword** (weapon) ✦ **At-Will**
Attack: Melee 1 (one creature); +8 vs. AC
Hit: 5 damage.

Triggered Actions

Hobgoblin Resilience ✦ **At-Will**
Trigger: The grunt is subjected to an effect that a save can end.
Effect (Immediate Reaction): The grunt makes a saving throw against the triggering effect.

Skills Athletics +7, History +3
Str 18 (+5) **Dex** 14 (+3) **Wis** 13 (+2)
Con 15 (+3) **Int** 10 (+1) **Cha** 9 (+0)
Alignment evil **Languages** Common, Goblin
Equipment leather armor, longsword, light shield

Goblin Cutter **Level 1 Minion Skirmisher**
Small natural humanoid XP 25

HP 1; a missed attack never damages a minion. **Initiative** +5
AC 16, **Fortitude** 12, **Reflex** 14, **Will** 11 **Perception** +1
Speed 6 Low-light vision

Standard Actions

⊕ **Short Sword** (weapon) ✦ **At-Will**
Attack: Melee 1 (one creature); +6 vs. AC
Hit: 4 damage, or 5 damage if the goblin has combat advantage against the target.

Triggered Actions

Goblin Tactics ✦ **At-Will**
Trigger: The goblin is missed by an attack.
Effect (Immediate Reaction): The goblin shifts 1 square.

Skills Stealth +5, Thievery +5
Str 14 (+2) **Dex** 17 (+3) **Wis** 12 (+1)
Con 13 (+1) **Int** 8 (-1) **Cha** 8 (-1)
Alignment evil **Languages** Common, Goblin
Equipment leather armor, short sword

Conclusion

Having just set out, the *Red Cutter* has no treasure aboard. If the characters interrogate captive goblins, they can learn the following information.

- The *Red Cutter* belongs to Captain Granack, self-proclaimed "Scourge of the Silverwrack Coast." The hobgoblin took command after ousting the nefarious Captain Slygo.
- Granack's lair is an underground complex on Blood Anchor Island, not far from the island's only settlement, Shantytown. The captain is there, along with the pirates' treasure and a number of prisoners taken in the last raid.
- Slygo was last seen drowning his sorrows at the Smashed Skull, a tavern in Shantytown. He swore that one day he'd win back the *Red Cutter*, but Granack laughed at him.
- Under any threat, the goblins reveal that the guards in Shantytown won't attack creatures that they believe to be pirates.

Blood Anchor Island

Goblin pirates took over this small isle two years ago. One of their ships, the *Blood Anchor*, had been badly damaged in a raid, and it eventually sank in a sheltered cove on the island's south side. Naming the island after their sunken pirate vessel, the goblins salvaged the wreck and used the wood to build the first structures of what would later become Shantytown.

Other goblin vessels brought supplies to the island, and as Shantytown grew, the goblins began exploring their new home. They laid claim to an underground complex called the Spiral, which provided the only easy access to the island's interior. While exploring the interior, the goblins were attacked by a nasty tribe of lizardfolk and decided to leave the reptilian

humanoids alone. Guards were placed in the Spiral to keep the lizardfolk from using it to reach Shantytown, but the reptilian creatures have yet to threaten the goblins.

When the characters reach the island, read:
A steadily growing dot on the horizon has now become an island. Navigator Jev Tancred confirms that this is the location noted on the map—Blood Anchor Island, the lair of the pirate scourge.

Much of the island is surrounded by high, rugged cliffs, above which rises an even taller ridge of rock. Along the isle's southern shore, a cove opens up where the surrounding cliffs dwindle down to the sea. A long white beach extends from cliff to cliff, beyond which spreads a thick jungle. A ramshackle village squats on the beach, with a number of small sailing boats berthed at its piers and wharves.

Making Landfall

Landing anywhere along the island's ever-present cliffs is impossible, and any ship or boat attempting to do so is dashed to pieces. Landing on the beach or docking at Shantytown are the only options open to the characters, but either of those approaches can incorporate different strategies.

Use Stealth

The characters might sneak ashore by boat somewhere along the beach, then make their way into Shantytown without attracting undue attention. If they abandon any attempt at stealth or get themselves into trouble, they face the monsters described in the Town Watch encounter (see below) and possibly the citizens of the town.

Pretend to Be Pirates

The goblins don't attack any ship that flies a pirate flag. Nongoblin pirate vessels stop here from time to time, and the residents of the town covet the money that such visitors spend here. Likewise, if the characters anchor the *Fortune Star* out at sea and row ashore in a boat flying a pirate flag, the goblins do not attack.

Assault Shantytown

Captain Tancred is hesitant to sail the *Fortune Star* into the harbor for an attack. If the characters compel her to do so, they face several rounds of incoming missile fire from the guards atop the watchtowers (area 2). The town guard assembles in the streets as the alarm is raised, and the characters are in for a stiff fight. If the adventurers bring the surviving crew of the *Fortune Star* with them on this attack, assume the battle ends when the characters defeat the monsters described in the Town Watch encounter.

Approach Peacefully

If the characters arrive aboard the *Red Cutter* without behaving aggressively, the goblin guards, puzzled and unsure, don't fire on the ship. When the adventurers step onto the wharf, the jig is up and the alarm is raised.

Shantytown

The town is built mostly of local timber, with a few ship's rails and masts here and there. The buildings in general have a rough, barbaric look to them.

Many of the buildings have small walkways around their rooftops, enabling goblin sharpshooters to fire down into the streets.

Bridges: Rickety rope and wood bridges connect the buildings 15 feet above street level. Any creature on a bridge that takes damage must make an Acrobatics check. On a result of 10 or lower, the creature falls and takes 1d10 damage. On a result of 11–15, the creature falls prone on the bridge.

Climbing Walls: Scaling a building requires a DC 15 Athletics check.

CREW COMPANIONS

When the *Fortune Star* makes landfall, Captain Tancred is content to guard the ship while the characters complete their mission. If the characters insist that members of the crew accompany them, the captain orders Allan Colgrave and his crew to go with the party. Colgrave and his scalawags cooperate grudgingly, even as they wait to betray the characters and claim Slygo's treasure.

Creatures: Shantytown is home to forty adult goblin cutters and forty adult hobgoblin grunts, as well as numerous goblin and hobgoblin children. These citizens let the town watch deal with intruders, but they come out in force if they believe their home is threatened.

Town Watch

Combat Encounter Level 5 (1,025 XP)

A bugbear thug named Gorn leads the town watch. When Shantytown is threatened, he musters a force of hobgoblins and goblins to slay the invader scum.

Light: Varies, depending on the time of day.

Monsters: Gorn (bugbear thug), 4 hobgoblin spear soldiers, 2 goblin sharpshooters.

If they spot any enemies, the hobgoblin archers in area 2 join the battle. They are not included in the XP award for this encounter.

When the characters confront the watch, read:
A snarling, fly-ridden bugbear leads a gang of half-drunk hobgoblin warriors in your direction, all of them spoiling for a fight.

Perception DC 20: *Two goblins slink along the rooftops, trying to remain unseen.*

The goblin sharpshooters try to stay hidden as they provide artillery support for Gorn and his brute squad. Gorn might receive additional support from the hobgoblin archers stationed atop the watchtowers (see area 2 for statistics).

If the characters claim to be in Shantytown on business and Gorn has no reason to think otherwise, he watches them closely but doesn't attack. If things turn ugly, however, he shows no mercy.

Bugbear Thug **Level 4 Brute**
Medium natural humanoid XP 175

HP 65; **Bloodied** 32 **Initiative** +7
AC 16, **Fortitude** 15, **Reflex** 15, **Will** 11 **Perception** +8
Speed 6 Low-light vision

Traits

Bushwhack
The bugbear gains a +4 bonus to attack rolls against a creature that has no allies adjacent to it.

Standard Actions

⊕ **Morningstar** (weapon) ✦ **At-Will**
Attack: Melee 1 (one creature); +9 vs. AC
Hit: 2d8 + 6 damage, or 3d8 + 6 if the bugbear has combat advantage against the target.

↛ **Handaxe** (weapon) ✦ **At-Will**
Attack: Ranged 10 (one creature); +9 vs. AC
Hit: 1d6 + 6 damage.

Skills Stealth +12
Str 20 (+7) **Dex** 20 (+7) **Wis** 13 (+3)
Con 15 (+4) **Int** 8 (+1) **Cha** 10 (+2)
Alignment evil **Languages** Common, Goblin
Equipment leather armor, morningstar, 2 handaxes

4 Hobgoblin Spear Soldiers **Level 3 Skirmisher**
Medium natural humanoid XP 150 each

HP 48; **Bloodied** 24 **Initiative** +5
AC 17, **Fortitude** 17, **Reflex** 15, **Will** 15 **Perception** +3
Speed 6 Low-light vision

Traits

Threatening Reach
The hobgoblin can make opportunity attacks against enemies within its weapon's reach (2 squares).

Standard Actions

⊕ **Longspear** (weapon) ✦ **At-Will**
Attack: Melee 2 (one creature); +8 vs. AC
Hit: 1d10 + 6 damage.

↛ **Javelin** (weapon) ✦ **At-Will**
Attack: Ranged 20 (one creature); +8 vs. AC
Hit: 2d6 + 4 damage.

Move Actions

Phalanx Movement ✦ **At-Will**
Effect: The hobgoblin and each ally adjacent to it can shift 1 square as a free action. The allies must end adjacent to the hobgoblin.

Triggered Actions

Tactical Withdrawal ✦ **At-Will**
Trigger: An enemy enters a square adjacent to the hobgoblin.
Effect (Immediate Reaction): The hobgoblin shifts up to 3 squares.

Str 19 (+5) **Dex** 15 (+3) **Wis** 14 (+3)
Con 16 (+4) **Int** 11 (+1) **Cha** 10 (+1)
Alignment evil **Languages** Common, Goblin
Equipment chainmail, longspear, 6 javelins

2 Goblin Sharpshooters **Level 2 Artillery**
Small natural humanoid XP 125 each

HP 31; **Bloodied** 15 **Initiative** +5
AC 16, **Fortitude** 12, **Reflex** 14, **Will** 11 **Perception** +2
Speed 6 Low-light vision

Traits

Combat Advantage
If a target granting combat advantage to the sharpshooter is hit by the sharpshooter's attack, the target takes 1d6 extra damage.

Sniper
If the sharpshooter misses with a ranged attack while hidden, it remains hidden.

Standard Actions

⊕ **Short Sword** (weapon) ✦ **At-Will**
Attack: Melee 1 (one creature); +7 vs. AC
Hit: 2d6 + 2 damage.

↛ **Hand Crossbow** (weapon) ✦ **At-Will**
Attack: Ranged 10/20 (one creature); +9 vs. AC
Hit: 1d6 + 7 damage.

Triggered Actions

Goblin Tactics ✦ **At-Will**
Trigger: The sharpshooter is missed by an attack.
Effect (Immediate Reaction): The sharpshooter shifts 1 square.

Skills Stealth +12, Thievery +12
Str 14 (+3) **Dex** 18 (+5) **Wis** 13 (+2)
Con 13 (+2) **Int** 8 (+0) **Cha** 8 (+0)
Alignment evil **Languages** Common, Goblin
Equipment leather armor, short sword, hand crossbow, 20 bolts

1. Wharves

Exploration Encounter

Decrepit wharves extend out into the cove. It is possible to dock larger vessels here, including the *Red Cutter* and the *Fortune Star*. Nine smaller, single-masted patrol and fishing boats are presently moored here.

2. Watchtowers

Combat Encounter Level 1 (600 XP)

Hobgoblins assigned to these watchtowers keep an eye on the wharves (area 1) and watch the cove for approaching ships. If an unfamiliar vessel enters the cove without flying a pirate flag, the hobgoblins sound the alarm to alert the town watch.

Light: Varies depending on the time of day.
Monsters: 4 hobgoblin archers (2 per tower).

When you are ready to begin the encounter, read:

Overlooking the wharves stand a pair of thirty-five-foot watchtowers made of stacked logs. Each one sports a pitched roof draped with sunbaked palm leaves.

Each watchtower is a hollow structure with an internal ladder leading up to the rooftop. Creatures atop the towers have superior cover against attacks from the ground and partial cover against attacks from neighboring rooftops.

4 Hobgoblin Archers	Level 3 Artillery
Medium natural humanoid	XP 150 each
HP 39; **Bloodied** 19	**Initiative** +5
AC 17, **Fortitude** 13, **Reflex** 15, **Will** 13	**Perception** +8
Speed 6	Low-light vision
Standard Actions	
⊕ **Longsword** (weapon) ✦ **At-Will**	
Attack: Melee 1 (one creature); +8 vs. AC	
Hit: 1d8 + 5 damage.	
➶ **Longbow** (weapon) ✦ **At-Will**	
Attack: Ranged 20/40 (one creature); +10 vs. AC	
Hit: 1d10 + 5 damage, and an ally within 5 squares of the archer gains a +2 bonus to its next ranged attack roll against the same target.	
Triggered Actions	
Hobgoblin Resilience ✦ **Encounter**	
Trigger: The archer is subjected to an effect that a save can end.	
Effect (Immediate Reaction): The archer makes a saving throw against the triggering effect.	
Skills Athletics +5, History +6	
Str 14 (+3) **Dex** 19 (+5)	**Wis** 14 (+3)
Con 15 (+3) **Int** 11 (+1)	**Cha** 10 (+1)
Alignment evil **Languages** Common, Goblin	
Equipment leather armor, longsword, longbow, 30 arrows	

3. Smashed Skull Tavern

Roleplaying Encounter

This building is the most important and beloved of all the establishments in Shantytown. The tavern is two stories high, but the second floor is only a perimeter walkway 10 feet wide that runs around the inside walls. It is accessible by a rickety wooden staircase near the bar. Goblin patrons like to congregate on the walkway above their fellows on the ground floor, looking down on them, spitting, throwing drinks, and occasionally falling over the low railing in a drunken stupor.

Gansh is the tavern's fat goblin proprietor. He overcharges for his revolting watered-down beer made from fermented hops and beetles, which the goblins love. The barkeep (use a goblin cutter for his statistics) wears an oversized metal helmet with a broad brim to protect himself from mugs and other missiles hurled in his direction by his patrons.

The Smashed Skull's bouncer, Grokk, is a simple-minded bugbear thug who obeys Gansh's every word. Grokk is responsible for turfing out undesirables—most often customers who assault Gansh. Grokk is also the younger brother of Gorn, the leader of the town watch. If the characters harm Grokk, they must inevitably answer to Gorn.

At any given time, 3d10 goblin cutters and hobgoblin grunts are here.

Captain Slygo

Captain Slygo can be found in the Smashed Skull day or night. He is yesterday's hero, and none of the fickle goblins pay him much heed anymore. When Granack arrived on the island and demanded Slygo's surrender, the goblin captain recognized that he was outclassed and gave up at once, inspiring Granack to let him live. Since then, Slygo has been staying out of Granack's way and secretly using empty bottles from the Smashed Skull to send his maps out to sea.

When he becomes aware that strangers have come to the island, Slygo contacts the adventurers. If the characters avoid the Smashed Skull, Slygo actively searches for them.

When the characters meet Captain Slygo, read:

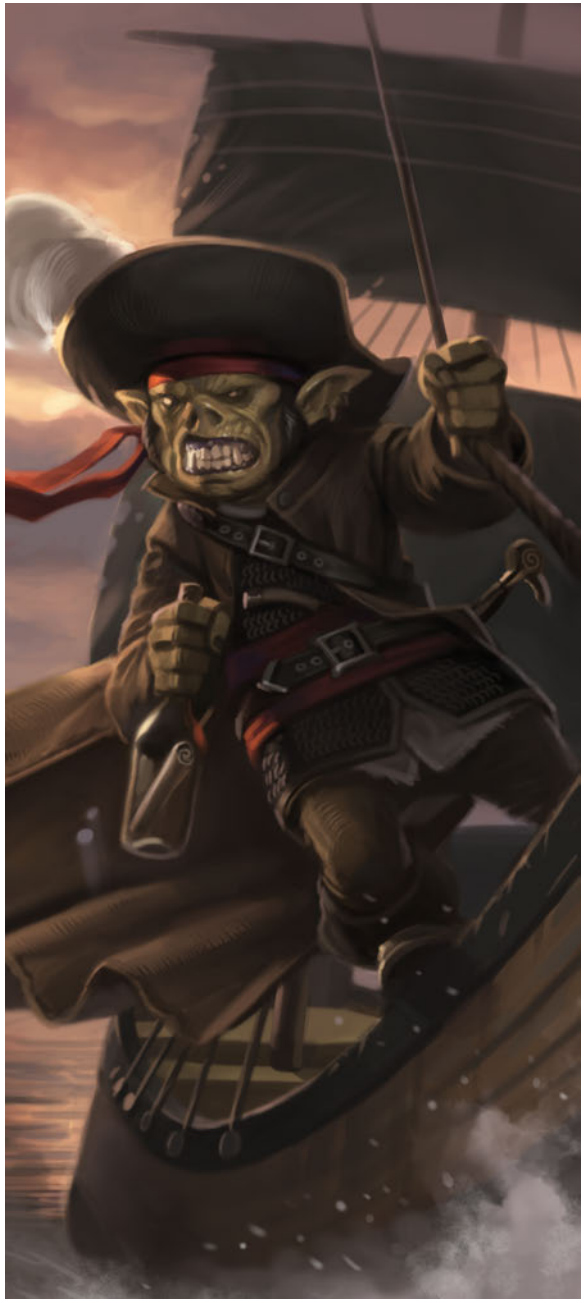
A goblin wearing a wide-brimmed hat and a long leather coat greets you. With one hand, he waves a dirty white rag tied to a stick.

"Parley!" he says. "Ya found a bottle, di'nt ya? I know why yar 'ere! I can 'elp ya! I can show ya where the treasure is! Lead ya right to it, I will!"

Slygo has been hoping that his maps would bring retribution of some sort to Blood Anchor Island, and the goblin asks to join the party. He wants revenge on Granack and the opportunity to retrieve the treasure he hid from the hobgoblin, so his offer is genuine. If the heroes attack him, however, he runs for it.

Captain Slygo knows the lay of the land and can provide a rough map of the Spiral, where Granack is holed up. He knows that Granack has a pair of guard drakes named Rudder and Keel, and that he is never seen without his pet raven, Vex. (Vex is actually an imp that advises Granack, but Slygo doesn't know that.) He also knows of the perils of the Secret Valley, the lizardfolk savages in particular.

Although Slygo is not averse to evil acts such as piracy, he fails to see any point in cruelty and murder for their own sake. He could just as easily live a life on the straight and narrow if there was a profit in it. If the pirate is treated well, he stands by the characters. If the adventurers mistreat him, he leaves them to their own devices. He is a master of passive aggressive behavior when he so chooses. The characters gain no XP for killing him.



Captain Slygo	Level 4 Striker
Small natural humanoid, goblin	
HP 31; **Bloodied** 15; **Healing Surges** 6	**Initiative** +5
AC 18, **Fortitude** 14, **Reflex** 17, **Will** 16	**Perception** +8
Speed 6	Low-light vision
Traits	
Survival Instinct	
While bloodied, Slygo gains a +2 power bonus to all defenses.	
Standard Actions	
⨺ **Short Sword** (weapon) ✦ **At-Will**	
Attack: Melee 1 (one creature); +11 vs. AC	
Hit: 1d6 + 5 damage, or 2d6 + 5 if the target is granting combat advantage to Slygo.	
✲ **Exploding Bottle** (fire, zone) ✦ **At-Will**	
Attack: Area burst 1 within 10 (creatures in the burst); +10 vs. Reflex	
Hit: Ongoing 5 fire damage (save ends).	
Effect: The burst creates a zone that lasts until the end of the encounter. Any creature that ends its turn in the zone takes 3 fire damage.	
Triggered Actions	
Sly Goblin Tactics ✦ **At-Will**	
Trigger: An enemy misses Slygo with an attack.	
Effect (Immediate Reaction): Slygo can shift up to 3 squares.	
Skills Bluff +11, Stealth +12, Thievery +10	
Str 10 (+2) **Dex** 17 (+5) **Wis** 12 (+3)	
Con 11 (+2) **Int** 12 (+3) **Cha** 14 (+4)	
Alignment evil **Languages** Common, Goblin	
Equipment leather coat, short sword, 3 exploding bottles, key to hidden treasure chest	

4. Shanties and Tents

Exploration Encounter

One-fifth of the buildings in these areas are 10-foot-square wooden hovels with a single door and window. The rest are tents wedged in and around the more permanent structures. The goblin families of Shantytown live here.

5. Old Temple Road

Exploration Encounter

The old stone road that leads out of town is covered in mismatched flagstones and kept clear of jungle growth. Goblin pirates originally felled the trees along the road, using the lumber to expand Shantytown and repair their ships.

Pikes and stakes have been driven into the ground alongside the road at intervals and are decorated with skulls and rotting heads. Most of these are human, but some are goblins that annoyed Granack.

The Spiral

The road from Shantytown leads to the Spiral, an ancient gateway built by lizardfolk. The Spiral is the entrance to the Secret Valley, and it also serves as Granack's private residence.

When the characters approach the Spiral, read:
The old flagstone road leads to an enormous granite cliff, the bottom third of which is overgrown with jungle vines. Carved into this bluff at ground level is a giant snake's head with lamp light burning in its eyes. Pillars hold open its fanged maw, within which is set a pair of wooden double doors.

Perception DC 15: *A similar snake's head protrudes from the rock wall fifty feet above ground level.*

Perception DC 20: *Lurking in the open mouth of the upper snake head are two bugbear guards.*

If Captain Slygo is with the characters, he refers to the carved heads as the Great Snake Heads of Kekuala. He can recount the information given in the "Cult of Kekuala" sidebar.

The adventurers can also learn this information with a successful DC 19 Religion or History check.

Approaching the Spiral

Unless the characters take measures to stay hidden, the guards in area 1 spot them as they approach. One bugbear warrior leaves to warn Granack (area 4) while the other watches to see what the characters do. The bugbears have only melee weapons, and they withdraw if subjected to ranged attacks.

Wooden Doors: The wooden doors leading to the Spiral are barred shut and require a DC 21 Athletics check to break open. Breaking through the doors alerts the Spiral's inhabitants. Knocking on the doors brings one of the bugbears from area 1 to investigate.

Scaling the Cliff: Characters can reach the upper snake head by scaling 50 feet up the cliff. Thanks to abundant handholds and vines, the climb requires only DC 10 Athletics checks.

Truce: If the characters approach and ask to see Granack, the bugbears demand to know their business. Convincing the bugbears to let the party in requires good roleplaying, or a DC 15 group Bluff check or group Diplomacy check. Slygo, if present, can contribute to the group check. If the bugbears are convinced that the characters mean Granack no harm, the guards make their way down toward the entrance, open the doors, and escort the characters to area 4.

Encounters in the Spiral

The lizardfolk built the Spiral for use as a gateway and guardhouse, but Granack now uses it as his private residence. Its twisting main passage leads down to a bronze door (area 8), which opens onto a tunnel leading to the Secret Valley.

Architecture: The walls and ceilings are covered with intricate and colorful abstract mosaics. In keeping with the philosophy of Kekuala, there are no straight lines within the Spiral. The doorways are of slightly different shapes and sizes, just as the main passage varies in thickness and width as it descends.

CULT OF KEKUALA

In the days of legend, the lizardfolk deity Semuanya lived with its mate Kekuala in the great Bog of Semuanya. Over time, Kekuala became more and more distracted by abstract and cerebral matters, until ultimately the god split into two entities: male and female. These two were the first mortal lizardfolk. The death of the deity was deemed a marvelous sacrifice by the early lizardfolk, and they resolved to honor it.

A great empire of the lizardfolk arose, one dedicated to matters of the intellect, knowledge, and abstract philosophy. This empire covered vast territory, and the temple on Blood Anchor Island was just one of its many centers of worship and learning.

Eventually, the golden age of the lizardfolk empire came to an end. The ruling class had become removed from the common lizardfolk and were failing to deal with their concerns. A rival philosophy became more powerful, that of the more warlike cult of Semuanya. The ways of Kekuala proved too abstract to deal with the practical concerns of fighting battles, and eventually they were abandoned, leaving shamans of Semuanya in charge. The way of Kekuala was forgotten.

The lizardfolk empire is a largely forgotten piece of history. The rise of the cult of Semuanya forbade all reference to it in their oral traditions, and memory of it has faded. The ruins on Blood Anchor Island are one of the few remnants of this ancient civilization's achievements.

Central Chamber: The center of the Spiral is a single open chamber dimly lit by guttering torches. Its ceiling rises to 70 feet above the upper entrance, and it is supported by irregularly shaped serpentine pillars that form a vaulted dome at the apex. The passage downward is a sloping ledge cut from the rock of the chamber, which spirals inward as it descends.

Falling: The edge of the downward-spiraling ledge features no protective rail. Any creature that falls off the edge takes 1d10 damage as it hits the level below.

Alarm: If alerted to the presence of a hostile force, Granack remains in his quarters (area 4), guarded by his faithful hobgoblin cleavers (who are otherwise encountered in area 3).

1. Upper Snake Head

Combat Encounter Level 1 (400 XP)

A staircase built into a stone tunnel leads up the "neck" of the higher snake head, opening into a wide stone platform situated within the jaw of the snake. Like the head on the ground, the upper part of this head is supported by pillars carved to represent the snake's fangs. The platform provides a magnificent view of Blood Anchor Cove.

Light: Varies depending on the time of day.

Monsters: 2 bugbear warriors.

The two bugbears stand in the shadows atop the platform, keeping watchful eyes on the entrance and the cove beyond.

2 Bugbear Warriors	**Level 5 Brute**
Medium natural humanoid	XP 200 each
HP 76; **Bloodied** 38	**Initiative** +5
AC 18, **Fortitude** 17, **Reflex** 15, **Will** 14	**Perception** +4
Speed 6	Low-light vision
Standard Actions	
⊕ **Morningstar** (weapon) ✦ **At-Will**	
Attack: Melee 1 (one creature); +10 vs. AC	
Hit: 2d8 + 7 damage.	
⸸ **Skullthumper** (weapon) ✦ **Encounter**	
Attack: Melee 1 (one creature granting combat advantage to the bugbear); +8 vs. Fortitude	
Hit: 2d8 + 7 damage, and the target falls prone and is dazed (save ends).	
Minor Actions	
Predatory Eye ✦ **Encounter**	
Effect: The bugbear deals 1d6 extra damage on the next attack it makes against a target granting it combat advantage before the end of its next turn.	
Skills Intimidate +7, Stealth +9	
Str 20 (+7) **Dex** 16 (+5) **Wis** 14 (+4)	
Con 16 (+5) **Int** 10 (+2) **Cha** 10 (+2)	
Alignment evil **Languages** Common, Goblin	
Equipment hide armor, morningstar	

2. Storeroom

Exploration Encounter

Granack keeps his personal supplies of food and alcohol in this chamber. Enough rations are stored here to keep five Medium creatures alive for two weeks. Twenty-four kegs of rum and fifty-three bottles of red wine are here as well.

3. Kitchen

Combat Encounter Level 1 (450 XP)

Granack's meals are prepared here.

Light: Dim (sputtering torches in sconces).

Monsters: If the characters have successfully infiltrated the Spiral without raising the alarm, Granack's three hobgoblin cleaver followers are here, preparing a slaughtered kruthik for their captain's next meal. If an alarm has been sounded, the cleavers are instead in area 4.

When the door is opened, read:

This kitchen is a conglomeration of pots, pans, half-eaten food, and cluttered benches. It smells of rotting vegetation and burned meat.

The cleavers are Granack's cooks, bodyguards, and lovers, and they are the only ones he trusts to prepare his food and keep his bed. These females are willing to die to protect Granack, but he does not feel the same way about them. The other goblins fear these favored servants because they are good at overhearing any dissent and reporting it back to their leader. The cleavers intimidate even the bugbears.

Treasure: Each cleaver wears three pieces of jewelry, amounting to one treasure of the characters' level.

3 Hobgoblin Cleavers	**Level 3 Brute**
Medium natural humanoid	XP 150 each
HP 54; **Bloodied** 27	**Initiative** +3
AC 15, **Fortitude** 16, **Reflex** 15, **Will** 14	**Perception** +2
Speed 6	Low-light vision
STANDARD ACTIONS	
⊕ **Handaxe** (weapon) ✦ **At-Will**	
Attack: Melee 1 (one creature); +8 vs. AC	
Hit: 2d6 + 5 damage.	
⸸ **Twin Strike** (weapon) ✦ **At-Will**	
Attack: Melee 1 (one or two creatures); +8 vs. AC	
Hit: 2d6 + 3 damage.	
MOVE ACTIONS	
⇦ **Phalanx Movement** ✦ **At-Will**	
Effect: Close burst 1 (allies in the burst); the cleaver can shift 1 square, and then each target can take a free action to shift 1 square to a square adjacent to the cleaver.	
TRIGGERED ACTIONS	
Enraged Attack ✦ **Encounter**	
Trigger: The cleaver is first bloodied.	
Effect (Immediate Reaction): The cleaver uses *twin strike*.	
Hobgoblin Resilience ✦ **Encounter**	
Trigger: The cleaver is subjected to an effect that a save can end.	
Effect (Immediate Reaction): The cleaver can make a saving throw against the triggering effect.	
Str 17 (+4) **Dex** 14 (+3) **Wis** 13 (+2)	
Con 14 (+3) **Int** 10 (+1) **Cha** 11 (+1)	
Alignment evil **Languages** Common, Goblin	
Equipment leather armor, 2 handaxes	

4. Granack's Quarters

Combat Encounter Level 3 (800 XP)

Granack resides here with his imp advisor and pet guard drakes. In his spare time, the hobgoblin pirate counts his gold and plots his next raid.

Light: Bright (torches).

Monsters: Captain Granack, Vex (imp), 2 guard drakes.

Other Creatures: If an alarm has sounded, the bugbear warriors from area 1 and the hobgoblin cleavers from area 3 might also be present.

When the door is opened, read:

This room is a true pirate captain's lair, decked out with rich carpets, expensive chairs, skulls, a pair of chests, tapestries and large framed mirrors on the walls, statues of religious figures (most of them damaged or defaced in some way), and furled maps. A large bed sits squarely against the north wall, its posts made of figureheads taken from captured ships.

A swarthy, red-skinned hobgoblin slouches in a chair draped with mangy furs, a large feathered hat on his head. As he stands and draws his two scimitars, two green-scaled drakes slink out from behind the chair and hiss at you.

"Fresh meat, boys!" shouts the hobgoblin.

If an alarm has been sounded, Vex is invisible and perched above the door. Otherwise, the imp perches on the back of Granack's chair in raven form.

If the characters try to parley with Granack, he listens to what they have to say unless Slygo is present. In that case, Granack realizes that Slygo is using the adventurers to overthrow him, and he attacks and tries to kill Slygo first. Granack's guard drake pets are named Rudder and Keel, and they fight to the death to protect their master.

Frescoes: Behind the tapestries and mirrors, ancient crumbling frescoes line the walls. These paintings depict an aspect of Kekuala engaged in contemplation of various concepts, represented by a sequence of patterned and asymmetrical shapes.

Treasure: The items in the room are ill kept and worthless. The maps depict the Silverwrack Coast, some marked with trade routes and the locations of various goblin and hobgoblin tribes. At your discretion, one of the maps might be an old treasure map leading to a particularly dangerous island that even Granack is hesitant to explore.

Granack carries the keys to the two locked chests, which can otherwise be opened with DC 21 Thievery checks. These chests contain two treasures of the characters' level. Granack also has the key to area 7.

Captain Granack Level 5 Elite Skirmisher (Leader)
Medium natural humanoid, hobgoblin — XP 400

HP 124; **Bloodied** 62 — **Initiative** +6
AC 19, **Fortitude** 18, **Reflex** 16, **Will** 17 — **Perception** +8
Speed 6 — Low-light vision
Saving Throws +2; **Action Points** 1

Traits

Sly Charge
If Granack charges, he triggers no attack for leaving the initial square.

Standard Actions

⊕ **Scimitar** (weapon) ✦ **At-Will**
Attack: Melee 1 (one creature); +10 vs. AC
Hit: 2d8 + 4 damage, and Granack can shift 1 square.

⨽ **Dual Strike** (weapon) ✦ **At-Will**
Effect: Granack uses *scimitar* twice.

Minor Actions

Tactical Deployment ✦ **Recharge** ⚄ ⁞⁞
Effect: Close burst 2 (allies in the burst); the target can take a free action to shift up to 3 squares.

Triggered Actions

Hobgoblin Resilience ✦ **Encounter**
Trigger: Granack is subjected to an effect that a save can end.
Effect (Immediate Reaction): Granack can make a saving throw against the triggering effect.

Skills Athletics +11, Bluff +9, Intimidate +9, Stealth +9
Str 18 (+6) — **Dex** 14 (+4) — **Wis** 12 (+3)
Con 14 (+4) — **Int** 10 (+2) — **Cha** 15 (+4)
Alignment evil — **Languages** Common, Goblin
Equipment leather armor, 2 scimitars

Imp — **Level 3 Lurker**
Small immortal humanoid (devil) — XP 150

HP 40; **Bloodied** 20 — **Initiative** +8
AC 17, **Fortitude** 13, **Reflex** 17, **Will** 15 — **Perception** +8
Speed 4, fly 6 — Darkvision

Standard Actions

⊕ **Bite** ✦ **At-Will**
Attack: Melee 1 (one creature); +8 vs. AC
Hit: 1d6 + 5 damage.

Vanish (illusion) ✦ **At-Will**
Effect: The imp becomes invisible until the end of its next turn or until it hits or misses with an attack.

⨽ **Tail Sting** (poison) ✦ **Recharge** when the imp uses *vanish*
Attack: Melee 1 (one creature); +8 vs. AC
Hit: 2d8 + 3 damage, and the target takes ongoing 10 poison damage and a -2 penalty to Will (save ends both).

Skills Arcana +9, Bluff +9, Stealth +9
Str 12 (+2) — **Dex** 17 (+4) — **Wis** 14 (+3)
Con 16 (+4) — **Int** 16 (+4) — **Cha** 16 (+4)
Alignment evil — **Languages** Common, Supernal

Vex is also a shapechanger and has the following additional power.

Minor Actions

Change Shape (polymorph) ✦ **At-Will** (1/round)
Effect: The imp alters its physical form to that of a Tiny raven until the imp uses this power again or until it drops to 0 hit points. It retains its statistics but cannot use *tail sting* in this form. It takes a DC 26 Insight check to discern that the form is a disguise.

2 Guard Drakes — **Level 2 Brute**
Small natural beast (reptile) — XP 125 each

HP 48; **Bloodied** 24 — **Initiative** +3
AC 15, **Fortitude** 15, **Reflex** 13, **Will** 12 — **Perception** +7
Speed 6

Standard Actions

⊕ **Bite** ✦ **At-Will**
Attack: Melee 1 (one creature); +7 vs. AC
Hit: 1d10 + 3 damage, or 1d10 + 9 while the drake is within 2 squares of an ally.

Str 16 (+4) — **Dex** 15 (+3) — **Wis** 12 (+2)
Con 18 (+5) — **Int** 3 (-3) — **Cha** 12 (+2)
Alignment unaligned — **Languages** –

5. Collapsed Ceiling

Exploration Encounter

The ceiling here has fallen, filling this chamber with rubble and earth. Abstract murals on the walls provide no clue as to the room's original purpose.

6. Barracks

Exploration Encounter

This ill-kept room is the sleeping quarters of the guards in the Spiral. Pungent skins have been piled along the walls, which are set with curious abstract murals similar to those found in other areas of the complex.

7. Prison Cell

Roleplaying Encounter

The wooden door to this room is locked. Granack carries the key, or the door can be opened with a DC 21 Athletics check or Thievery check.

Light: None.
Creatures: 8 human prisoners.

When the door is opened, read:
A foul stench fills this room, which is occupied by several malnourished and unhappy prisoners.

The rag-clad prisoners are starving, filthy, and miserable. Six are humans from settlements up and down the Silverwrack Coast, along with two foreigners taken from merchant ships. They wear shackles that slow them until they are removed (requiring a DC 27 Strength check or a DC 15 Thievery check). The prisoners are ready to fight for their freedom if the characters are willing to lead them. They are the equivalent of human goons.

One of the prisoners is Harno Holt, the twenty-five-year-old son of a powerful merchant named Drago Holt. He is pathetically grateful to be rescued.

8. Bronze-Covered Door

Exploration Encounter

Characters who descend into the Spiral eventually come to a door, beyond which stands a tunnel that leads to the Secret Valley.

Light: Dim (sputtering torches).

When the characters descend to the end of the spiral, read:

At the bottom of the Spiral stands a bronze-plated wooden door. Abstract swirls and patterns engraved into the metal are marred by corrosion.

Excessive dampness has caused the door to bloat and seal shut. The rotted wood beneath the bronze is soft, however, and the door can be broken down with a DC 13 Athletics check.

When the characters break through the door, read:

Beyond the door, a tunnel twists away into the darkness.

This tunnel runs the better part of two miles and opens out into the Secret Valley. Aside from a few bats near the exit, no creatures reside here.

The Secret Valley

Beyond the Spiral spreads a primeval jungle sheltered by tall, rocky ridges. The characters must venture into this dangerous landscape to retrieve Captain Slygo's precious treasure.

When the characters enter the Secret Valley, read:

Ahead, the tunnel suddenly opens up to the outside. Twenty feet beyond its end stand two curved, fanglike pillars that mark its location. The jungle is dense here, with vines hanging from the tall trees and the ground covered with undergrowth and decaying vegetation.

Mountains peek over the tips of the trees, extending all the way around this broad valley. Insects swarm through the cool air, which carries the smell of earth and slight decay as well as the distant calls of birds and other nameless creatures.

By counting his steps from the fang-shaped pillars, Slygo has a rough idea of how far into the jungle his treasure waits to be found. When he came here last time to bury his hoard, he set out in a straight line due north, until quite by chance he came to the temple of Kekuala (see below). If Slygo is with the party and cooperative, he can save the characters a lot of time in finding the treasure.

Without Slygo's aid, finding the temple is harder, requiring three successful DC 13 group Nature checks. Each failed group check costs each character one healing surge.

Temple of Kekuala

This building is an ancient temple of Kekuala, its floor plan designed to simulate an ancient symbol for wholeness or completion. Priests and pilgrims would meditate within, moving from room to room.

When the characters discover the temple, read:

A conglomeration of irregular domelike structures looms up from the undergrowth ahead. Closer inspection reveals that the domes are connected to form a larger building covered with moss and thick tangled vines. A long section extends from the main body of the structure, at the end of which an entrance opens up.

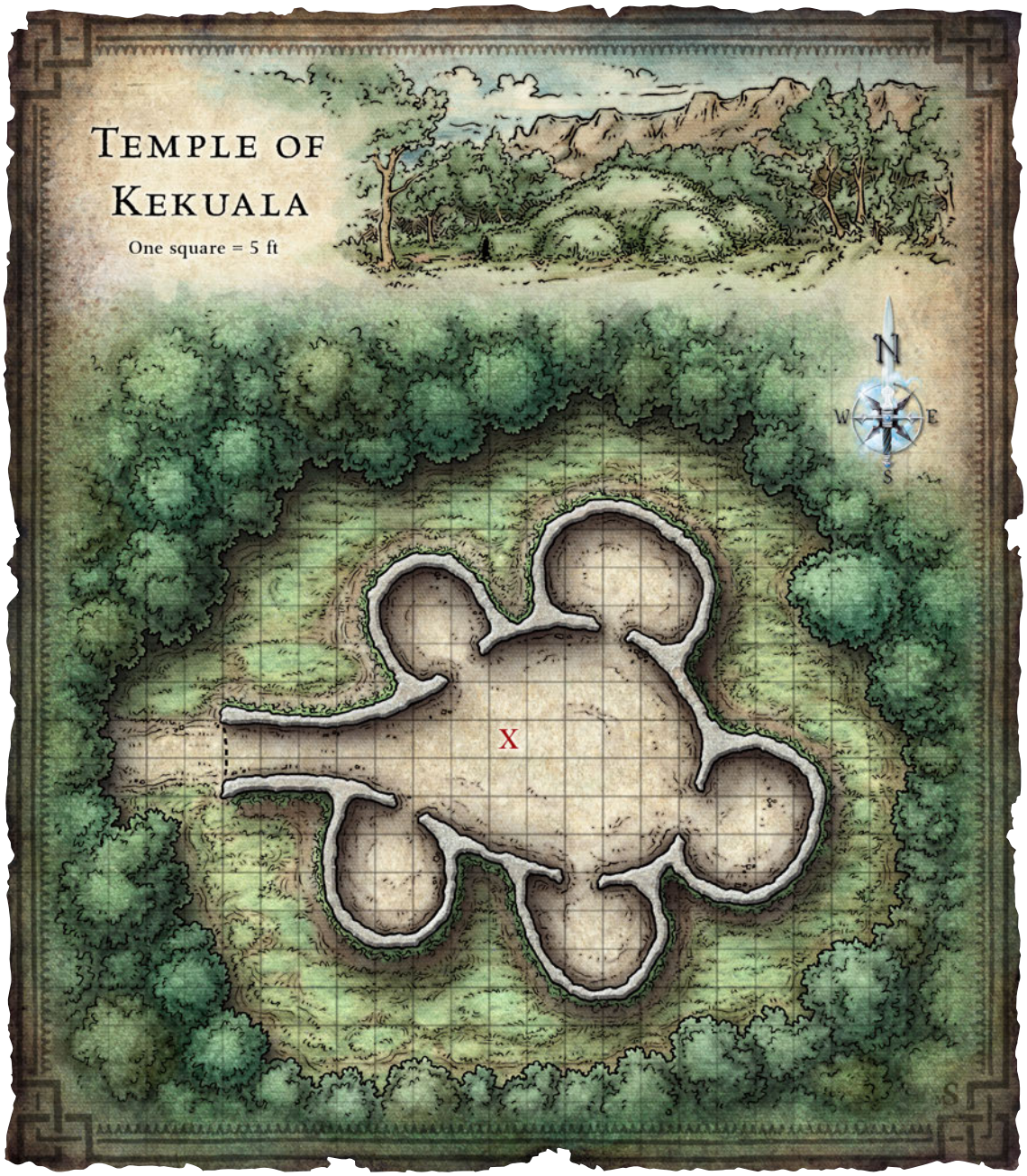
The building is made of stone but covered over with earth, creeping moss, and vines. It features no windows, and the only light inside comes through holes and cracks in the roof. Traces of large mosaics and murals can be seen on the floors and walls, but these have been defaced and chipped away, leaving only glimpses of what once was. Nothing lives in the temple or uses it as a lair, since the lizardfolk inhabiting the valley won't allow it.

Apart from the murals, the only objects of interest are the skeletal remains of four goblins, whose shattered skulls and gnawed bones are scattered across the floor. A character who makes a DC 21 Insight check notes Slygo's attempt to hide his nervous reaction to the sight, suggesting that he recognizes the remains. If pressed, he admits that these were the last of his loyal pirate chums—Delko, Kenkle, Smark, and One-Eyed Borbo. The five goblins came together to bury the treasure, but lizardfolk attacked them as they left the temple. Only Slygo escaped. Slygo then encourages the party to dig faster.

Buried Treasure

Slygo's treasure is in a wooden chest concealed under a loose flagstone in the main hall (marked X on the map). The floor was built over hard packed earth, which Slygo and his pirates dug up. After being revealed, the chest is easy to remove from its hole. It is locked (DC 22 Thievery check to pick), but Slygo still has the key on a leather thong around his neck.

Treasure: The chest contains five treasures of the characters' level. See "Concluding the Adventure."



Savages of Semuanya

Combat Encounter Level 5 (1,200 XP)

As the adventurers make their way out of the temple with Slygo's hoard, the lizardfolk who hold this site sacred attack them. The lizardfolk of the island are particularly savage, keeping their numbers down through selective cannibalism, feasting on the old and the weak. Their weapons are crude and they practice scarification. They are hostile toward all other species.

Light: Varies depending on the time of day outside. Dim light within the temple.

Monsters: Threescars (greenscale bog mystic), 2 greenscale hunters, 4 greenscale raiders.

When the lizardfolk attack, read:

A half-dozen lizardfolk with lustrous green scales and crude weapons suddenly storm out of the jungle. As the largest of them howls in anger, you see that it bears three nasty scars across its face.

Lore: Threescars is the oldest of the island lizardfolk, and he is too tough and ornery to end up being eaten. His war band keeps watch over the temple, and he became aware of intruders as the characters made their way through the valley.

Development: If the heroes leave the temple without digging up the treasure, or avoid the temple entirely, the lizardfolk attack when the characters make camp or prepare to leave the valley.

If Captain Slygo is present, he fights alongside the characters, realizing they're his best hope of survival against the savage lizardfolk. He hurls exploding bottles at Threescars to provoke the bog mystic into engaging in melee.

Undergrowth: Squares outside the clearing that surrounds the temple contain heavy jungle undergrowth and are difficult terrain.

Greenscale Bog Mystic **Level 6 Controller (Leader)**
Medium natural humanoid (reptile), lizardfolk XP 250

HP 70; **Bloodied** 35 **Initiative** +4
AC 20, **Fortitude** 17, **Reflex** 16, **Will** 19 **Perception** +7
Speed 6 (swamp walk)

Traits

☼ **Swamp Tangle** ✦ **Aura** 5
Whenever an enemy in the aura is hit by an attack, squares in the aura are difficult terrain for that enemy until the end of its next turn.

Standard Actions

⊕ **Spear** (weapon) ✦ **At-Will**
Attack: Melee 1 (one creature); +11 vs. AC
Hit: 2d8 + 5 damage.

✲ **Bog Cloud** (poison) ✦ **Recharge** ⚄ ⚅
Attack: Area burst 2 within 5 (creatures in the burst); +9 vs. Fortitude
Hit: 2d6 + 7 poison damage, and the target is dazed until the end of the mystic's next turn.
Miss: The target grants combat advantage until the end of the mystic's next turn.

✲ **Swamp's Grasp** (zone) ✦ **Encounter**
Attack: Area burst 2 within 5 (enemies in the burst); +9 vs. Reflex
Hit: 2d6 + 4 damage, and the target is immobilized (save ends).
Miss: Half damage, and the target is slowed (save ends).
Effect: The burst creates a zone of difficult terrain until the end of the encounter. The zone does not affect creatures that have swamp walk.

Minor Actions

⸸ **Feral Tail Lash** ✦ **At-Will**
Requirement: The mystic must be bloodied.
Attack: Melee 1 (one creature); +9 vs. Reflex
Hit: 1d6 damage, and the target is slowed until the end of the mystic's next turn.

Skills Athletics +10, Nature +12, Stealth +9
Str 15 (+5) **Dex** 13 (+4) **Wis** 19 (+7)
Con 14 (+5) **Int** 10 (+3) **Cha** 12 (+4)
Alignment evil **Languages** Draconic
Equipment spear

2 Greenscale Hunters **Level 4 Skirmisher**
Medium natural humanoid (reptile), lizardfolk XP 175 each

HP 54; **Bloodied** 27 **Initiative** +6
AC 17, **Fortitude** 15, **Reflex** 14, **Will** 13 **Perception** +8
Speed 6 (swamp walk)

Standard Actions

⊕ **Spear** (weapon) ✦ **At-Will**
Attack: Melee 1 (one creature); +9 vs. AC
Hit: 2d8 + 3 damage.

⸸ **Sidestep Attack** (weapon) ✦ **At-Will**
Effect: The lizardfolk shifts 1 square and makes a melee basic attack.

Skills Athletics +10, Nature +8
Str 17 (+5) **Dex** 15 (+4) **Wis** 12 (+3)
Con 14 (+4) **Int** 8 (+1) **Cha** 8 (+1)
Alignment unaligned **Languages** Draconic
Equipment light shield, spear

4 Greenscale Raiders **Level 3 Soldier**
Medium natural humanoid (reptile), lizardfolk XP 150 each

HP 45; **Bloodied** 22 **Initiative** +5
AC 19, **Fortitude** 17, **Reflex** 15, **Will** 13 **Perception** +1
Speed 6 (swamp walk)

Standard Actions

⊕ **Club** (weapon) ✦ **At-Will**
Attack: Melee 1 (one creature); +8 vs. AC
Hit: 1d10 + 5 damage.
Effect: The raider marks the target until the end of the raider's next turn.

Minor Actions

⊕ **Tail Sweep** ✦ **At-Will**
Requirement: The raider must be bloodied.
Attack: Melee 1 (one creature); +6 vs. Reflex
Hit: The target falls prone.

Triggered Actions

⸸ **Hunter's Response** (weapon) ✦ **Recharge** ⚃ ⚄ ⚅
Trigger: An enemy adjacent to the raider shifts.
Attack (Immediate Interrupt): Melee 1 (the triggering enemy); +8 vs. AC
Hit: 2d10 + 3 damage.
Miss: Half damage.

Skills Athletics +10, Stealth +8
Str 18 (+5) **Dex** 15 (+3) **Wis** 10 (+1)
Con 13 (+2) **Int** 8 (+0) **Cha** 8 (+0)
Alignment unaligned **Languages** Draconic
Equipment turtle shell shield, club

Concluding the Adventure

With Granack defeated, the goblin pirates abandon their murderous ways and the adventurers' mission is complete. They can return to Mastwick as heroes and collect any outstanding rewards.

The characters must decide how to divide the treasure. The *Fortune Star* crew expects to receive a full share. If Slygo is still with the party, he also asks for a share equal to that of a party member. The goblin considers this to be a generous deal and a fair reward for the characters' ridding the world of Granack. In any case, Slygo departs the island on a small boat or, if the characters allow it, he reclaims the *Red Cutter.*

If the characters don't share the treasure, the crew of the *Fortune Star* becomes their enemy, and the adventurers lose face in Mastwick and nearby areas. If the characters deny Slygo his share, he sulks and leaves without protest. The total wealth found in the adventure is eight treasures, even though the adventure sees the party gain only about half a level. You can compensate for this extra treasure by reducing the characters' rewards in future encounters.

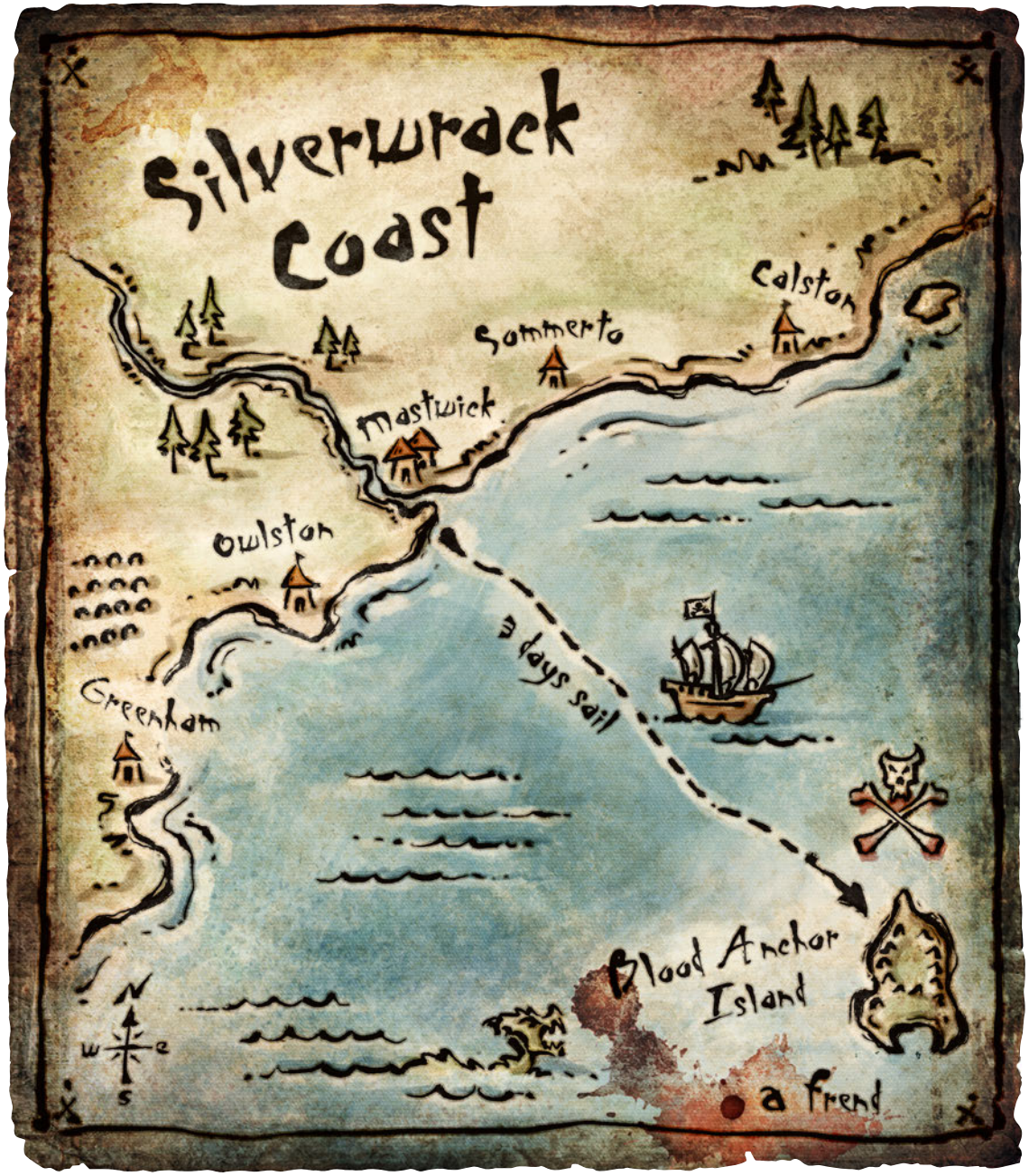
Colgrave and his scalawags might attempt to steal the treasure after it's back aboard the *Fortune Star.* They prefer to do so with subterfuge rather than through a confrontation with the adventurers.

If the adventurers encounter Captain Slygo in the future, the circumstances of their parting in this adventure will set the tone of their next meeting.

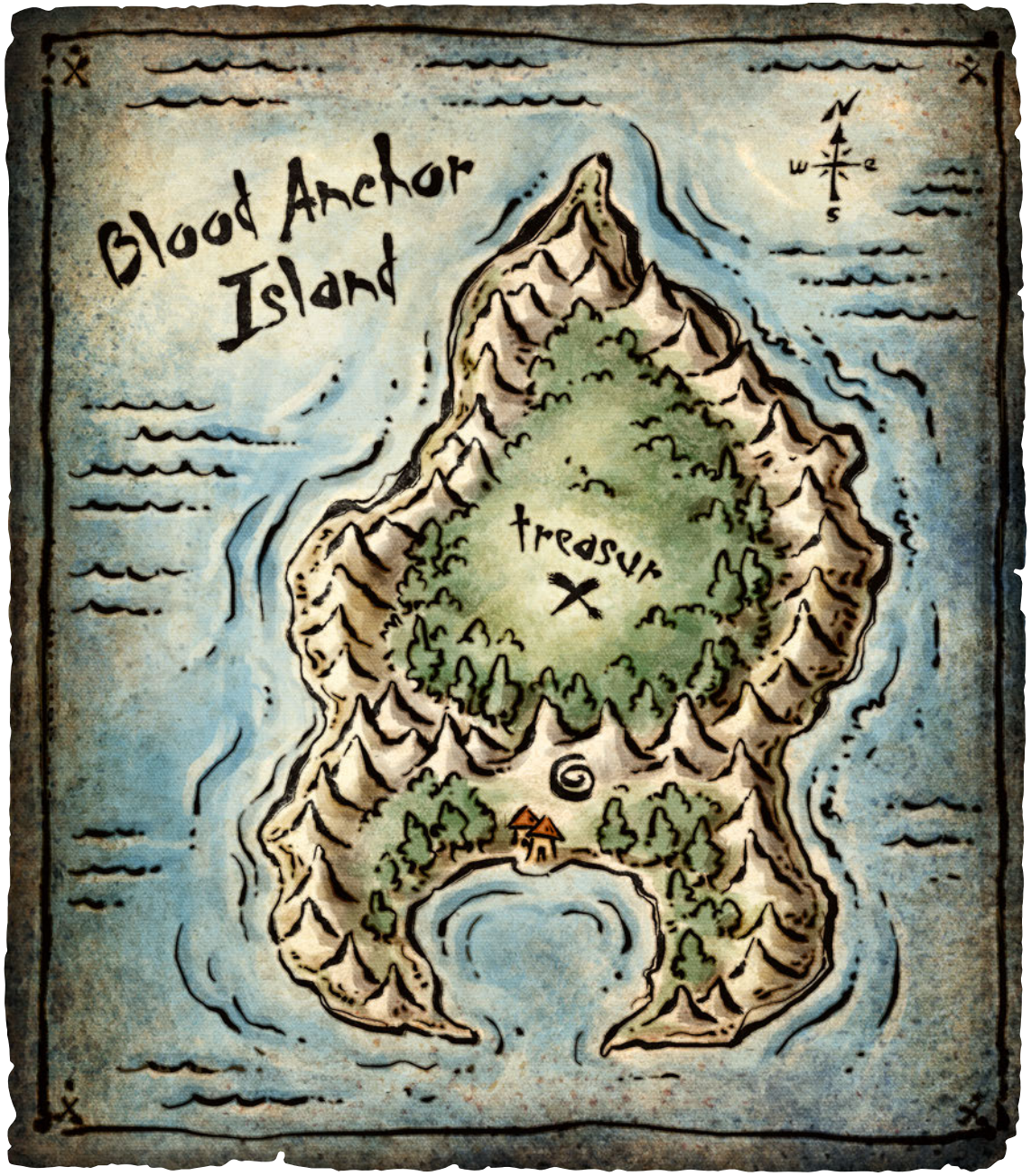
About the Author

Timothy Ide is a freelance illustrator who lives and works in Adelaide, South Australia, with his red-haired wife and two cats. In his spare time he likes writing, drawing, performing in Gilbert & Sullivan stage shows, painting model wargaming figures, and risking life and limb in medieval reenactment combat (the SCA). He has always liked goblins and pirates, so goblin pirates were a natural consequence.

Player Handout: Silverwrack Coast



Player Handout: Blood Anchor Island



Demonomicon of Iggwilv: Fraz-Urb'luu, Prince of Deception

By John "Ross" Rossomangno

Illustration by Ralph Horsley

Perhaps it was Zagig who set me upon my course. From the pages of the Tome of Zyx *I learned the foundation of what has become my art, my life's work. Together we imprisoned the Prince of Deception. And in observing his attempts at escape, I refined my craft. Long after I had finished with Zagig and begun to advance my own plans, a pair of easily duped adventurers released the demon prince from his prison.*

And now a creature whose very essence is composed of hatred and destruction is swollen with rage. But it is a scheming rage, an eruption of ruin to be brought forth in due time. When that eruption occurs, Fraz-Urb'luu will certainly visit vengeance not only on his former prison, the Material Realm, but on every demon prince that conspired to humiliate him. I am not too proud to admit that even I fear the consequences of his centuries of plotting.

—from the *Demonomicon of Iggwilv*

Mounting Rage

There is no shortage of cunning demons throughout the Abyss known to revel in duping their foes. But none approaches the mastery of deceit possessed by Fraz-Urb'luu. He delights in schemes that manipulate his victims into carrying out his will, then slowly reveal to them the atrocities that their actions brought about. The longer he prolongs a being's suffering, the better. Victims of his greatest "triumphs" are frequently imprisoned in Zoragmelok, the fortress-city that is the seat of Fraz-Urb'luu's power, where those torments are prolonged for centuries.

His taste in torment stems from both his demonic nature and from his hatred of mortals, particularly humans, whom he considers responsible for his own imprisonment. The infamous wizard Zagig duped Fraz-Urb'luu into appearing in the material world, stripped him of his power, and sealed him within a bas-relief beneath Castle Greyhawk for several hundred years. Only the intervention of a hapless pair of adventurers, deceived by the demon prince, finally freed him. The mortals' reward was their abduction and the destruction of their most prized possessions.

The prince's boundless fury at the humiliation of being outwitted and ensnared swelled even further when he returned to his layer of the Abyss. He found Hollow's Heart in ruins thanks to rampaging armies of rival demon princes and infighting among his subjects as they vied for dominance. The final insult was the theft and dismemberment of his prized staff, an artifact that could grant him absolute power over even the mightiest rival while within Hollow's Heart.

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Lore

Arcana DC 30: Residing in Hollow's Heart, the 176th layer of the Abyss, Fraz-Urb'luu is known as the Prince of Deception. His mastery of illusion and deceit is matched only by his prowess in demonic summoning; he is even able to call forth other demon princes for a limited time.

History DC 30: The demon prince was imprisoned by the wizard Zagig for centuries, and the knowledge gleaned from Fraz-Urb'luu contributed to works such as the *Demonomicon of Iggwilv*. Upon his escape, the demon prince discovered his realm in ruin and his greatest treasure, the *Staff of Fraz-Urb'luu*, sundered and lost.

Worst of the Worst

Fraz-Urb'luu counts no other demon lord as an ally. His rivals despise him, because his deceptiveness knows no bounds, and Fraz-Urb'luu can even call forth such lords and trick them into fighting his enemies. Many of these rivals were happy to aid in Zagig's plan to imprison Fraz-Urb'luu. But now that he has returned to his realm, these conspirators seek to hide their involvement. Fraz-Urb'luu's enemies watch Hollow's Heart but have not yet dared to move against its master.

Orcus and Graz'zt in particular are wary of Fraz-Urb'luu. Orcus eagerly colluded with Zagig and makes no secret of it. Now he is concerned that if the *Staff of Fraz-Urb'luu* is recovered, it could be used to destroy him (or any demon) if he is again summoned to Zoragmelok. Meanwhile, Graz'zt is determined to prove he can outsmart the Prince of Deception by being the one who collects the parts of the staff and assembles them.

Despite the ongoing activities of his cults, the wrathful demon has remained quiet, by and large. While the other demon princes keep an eye on the domain of Fraz-Urb'luu (mainly to be sure that he stays there), the Prince of Deception seems focused on restoring Hollow's Heart to its former glory. He relies upon his cultists and other agents to seek out news about the remains of his broken staff.

Unbeknownst to his enemies, who strive to keep any pieces of the staff from his possession, Fraz-Urb'luu already possesses the crystal, meaning that

Fraz-Urb'luu **Level 30 Solo Skirmisher**
Huge elemental humanoid (demon) XP 95,000

HP 1,108; **Bloodied** 554 **Initiative** +21
AC 43, **Fortitude** 42, **Reflex** 40, **Will** 41 **Perception** +24
Speed 10, fly 10 Blindsight 10, darkvision
Immune charm, illusion
Saving Throws +5; **Action Points** 2

Traits

☼ False Opportunity (illusion) ✦ **Aura** 5
No enemy can teleport into or out of the aura. If an enemy in the aura hits or misses Fraz-Urb'luu with an attack during his turn, the demon can immediately take a free action to slide the enemy up to 5 squares, and the enemy grants combat advantage until the end of Fraz-Urb'luu's next turn.

Screened
Unless Fraz-Urb'luu allows it, no scrying sensor can observe him and no divination ritual can be used to gain information about him. A scrying sensor instead sees nothing or an illusion that Fraz-Urb'luu dictates as a free action (Insight DC 42 to discern the illusion is false).

Instinctive Escape
If Fraz-Urb'luu starts his turn unable to take actions, *illusory escape* recharges, and he can use it as no action.

Standard Actions

⊕ Slam ✦ At-Will
Attack: Melee 3 (one creature); +35 vs. AC
Hit: 3d10 + 25 damage.

⊕ Bite ✦ At-Will
Attack: Melee 1 (one creature); +35 vs. AC
Hit: 3d6 + 25 damage.

⸸ Demonic Fury ✦ At-Will
Effect: Fraz-Urb'luu uses *slam* twice and *bite* once.

Abyssal Deception ✦ Daily
Requirement: Fraz-Urb'luu must be bloodied.
Effect: Fraz-Urb'luu takes 200 damage, *illusory escape* recharges, and Fraz-Urb'luu uses it. In the space he vacated, another demon prince—such as Graz'zt, Juiblex, Kostchtchie, Oublivae, or Zuggtmoy—appears. The demon prince is weakened, and it attacks Fraz-Urb'luu's enemies on Fraz-Urb'luu's initiative count. If Fraz-Urb'luu uses a minor action to dismiss the demon prince, Fraz-Urb'luu becomes visible, or the demon prince becomes bloodied, it disappears, returning whence it came.

Move Actions

Illusory Escape (illusion, teleportation) ✦ **Recharge** ⚅ ⚄ ⚃
Effect: Fraz-Urb'luu turns invisible and teleports up to 10 squares. He remains invisible until he hits or misses with an attack or until the end of the encounter.

Minor Actions

✧ Summoning Master ✦ At-Will
Effect: Close burst 20; 1d3 + 1 vrock lackeys appear in the burst, and then 1d2 nalfeshnee lackeys appear in the burst, up to a maximum of six demon lackeys present at any one time.

⸸ Tail ✦ At-Will
Requirement: Fraz-Urb'luu must have no creature grabbed.
Attack: Melee 3 (one creature); +30 vs. Fortitude
Hit: 3d6 + 25 damage, Fraz-Urb'luu can pull the target up to 2 squares, and the target is grabbed (escape DC 32) and takes ongoing 35 damage until the grab ends.

Triggered Actions

Variable Resistance ✦ 3/Encounter
Trigger: Fraz-Urb'luu takes acid, cold, fire, lightning, or thunder damage.
Effect (Free Action): Fraz-Urb'luu gains resist 30 to the triggering damage type until the end of the encounter or until he uses this power again.

Skills Arcana +26, Bluff +29, Insight +24, Stealth +24
Str 31 (+25) **Dex** 19 (+19) **Wis** 19 (+19)
Con 29 (+24) **Int** 22 (+21) **Cha** 28 (+24)
Alignment chaotic evil **Languages** Abyssal, Common, Primordial, telepathy 20

Vrock Lackey **Level 30 Minion Skirmisher**
Large elemental humanoid (demon) XP 4,750, or 0 if called by Fraz-Urb'luu

HP 1; a missed attack never damages a minion. **Initiative** +21
AC 44, **Fortitude** 42, **Reflex** 41, **Will** 41 **Perception** +17
Speed 8, fly 8 Darkvision

Standard Actions
⊕ **Claws** ✦ **At-Will**
Attack: Melee 2 (one creature); +35 vs. AC
Hit: 19 damage.

Triggered Actions
✧ **Spores of Madness** (poison) ✦ **Encounter**
Trigger: The lackey drops to 0 hit points.
Attack (Free Action): Close burst 2 (enemies in the burst); +33 vs. Will
Hit: 15 poison damage.
Miss: Half damage.

Str 23 (+21) **Dex** 19 (+19) **Wis** 15 (+17)
Con 20 (+20) **Int** 12 (+16) **Cha** 19 (+19)
Alignment chaotic evil **Languages** Abyssal, Common

Nalfeshnee Lackey **Level 30 Minion Soldier**
Huge elemental humanoid (demon) XP 4,750, or 0 if called by Fraz-Urb'luu

HP 1; a missed attack never damages a minion. **Initiative** +18
AC 46, **Fortitude** 41, **Reflex** 40, **Will** 42 **Perception** +21
Speed 6, fly 6 Darkvision

Standard Actions
⊕ **Claws** ✦ **At-Will**
Attack: Melee 3 (one creature); +35 vs. AC
Hit: 19 damage, and the target is slowed (save ends).

Triggered Actions
✧ **Dying Curse** (psychic) ✦ **Encounter**
Trigger: The lackey drops to 0 hit points.
Attack (Free Action): Close burst 2 (enemies in the burst); +33 vs. Will
Hit: 15 psychic damage.
Miss: Half damage.

Str 25 (+22) **Dex** 13 (+16) **Wis** 23 (+21)
Con 23 (+21) **Int** 23 (+21) **Cha** 27 (+23)
Alignment chaotic evil **Languages** Abyssal, Common

anyone who hopes to make the staff whole again must eventually confront the prince. Thus, it is actually in his best interest for his would-be conquerors to obtain other pieces of the artifact—so those pieces will be ripe for the plucking when the search for the crystal brings those enemies right to his doorstep.

Physical Description

The immense bulk of Fraz-Urb'luu is covered in taut, bluish-gray skin. He often hunches in an ape-like posture when at rest, his muscular forearms reaching to the ground, yet still stands nearly 18 feet tall. His small, smoldering eyes contrast with his tall ears and pointed head. When he is pleased at gaining the upper hand, his mouth opens to reveal a smile of fangs. When he is agitated, his tail thrashes around, lashing and clubbing anything nearby.

The Cult of Deception

Followers of Fraz-Urb'luu congregate in groups of like-minded individuals. Calling themselves the Cult of Deception, their goal is to undermine organizations and figures of trust and authority, and in so doing procure more victims to swell the number of souls that contribute to Fraz-Urb'luu's burgeoning power. A cell of the cult typically masquerades as a sect of worshipers of a good deity or a seemingly altruistic agency. The cell members recruit individuals under the false premise of furthering a good cause, then slowly convince these people that certain dark deeds must be committed to further the greater good. This trend continues until a subject becomes willing to die to avert some great catastrophe.

When such a victim is claimed for Fraz-Urb'luu, the soul is delivered into the prince's clutches rather than passing on to its final resting place. The afterlife that the soul experiences is a ruse, perpetrated through illusions that Fraz-Urb'luu creates within the sealed prisons of Zoragmelok. Then, little by little, he reveals to his victim the truth of the situation before finally devouring the individual.

Though he prefers human victims, Fraz-Urb'luu also actively seeks out devas. A deceived and corrupted deva is reborn in Zoragmelok as a rakshasa and given a position in the hierarchy of the ruling caste of Hollow's Heart. These creatures are sometimes returned to the world to sow further discord among the friends and family of their former lives.

Beyond providing the demon prince with sacrifices, the Cult of Deception represents his spies in the world. They gather information on the cults of rival demon princes, archdevils, and anyone else Fraz-Urb'luu thinks he can manipulate to his advantage. A cell of the cult might hire adventurers, through a front organization, to attack enemies or seek out information on the *Staff of Fraz-Urb'luu* under the guise of keeping it from the demon lord.

Adventure Hooks

The Cult of Deception makes an effective heroic and paragon tier adversary. Cells are usually encountered in areas of civilization, and their membership is drawn from the populace in that area. High-ranking members often summon demons to guard their inner sanctums but otherwise rely upon less overtly demonic defenses.

- ✦ A popular young man becomes the primary suspect in a series of murders. Because he is an acolyte in the Temple of Erathis, his brethren insist that there has been a misunderstanding. Several of the "faithful" are actually followers of Fraz-Urb'luu and have convinced the errant acolyte that he must dispense justice where they cannot. The characters must convince the deluded young man that he has been lied to and ferret out the traitorous members of the temple.

- A curio dealer believes she has determined the location of a piece of the *Staff of Fraz-Urb'luu* and hires the characters to escort her to it. They must contend not only with the creatures infesting the dungeon but with cultists of both Orcus and Fraz-Urb'luu trying to reach the fragment first. The dealer herself could be an incubus, one of Fraz-Urb'luu's favored forms of demon.
- The heroes encounter a lost soul, a man who claims to have escaped from Hollow's Heart after being waylaid by the Cult of Deception. He wants to guide the party toward setting his evil deeds right again. Whether the spirit is sincere or another of Fraz-Urb'luu's deceits is for the characters to figure out.
- As the adventurers delve into the Cult of Deception, they uncover the involvement of rakshasas. A cabal of the creatures, whose members call themselves the Hollow Rajahs, serves Fraz-Urb'luu and acts as the heart of the Cult of Deception.

Hollow's Heart

The 176th layer of the Abyss is a mutable place, bending to every whim of its ruler. Prior to his captivity, Fraz-Urb'luu had molded it to his satisfaction. But during his centuries away, nearly everything eroded into fine white ash, even the ruins left in the wake of his rivals' rampaging armies. The sky itself was stripped of its features, remaining black despite the strange light that illuminated the stark landscape in a perpetual dusk.

Much of Hollow's Heart remains a cold, unfinished wasteland, and the flat plains of white ash that stretch between outposts of so-called civilization are littered with the bones of the lost. Upon his return, the demon prince began restoring some of his forgotten cities beginning with his capital, Zoragmelok, but to date has neglected many broad swaths of wilderness.

Most of his rivals, and even the dwellers within Hollow's Heart, believe the demon prince is preoccupied with restoring his realm to its former glory. But many of these efforts are empty and constructed for show. Some cities are nothing more than abandoned facades, and a forest viewed up close can turn out to be little more than several lines of trees meant to be observed from a distance.

Unbeknownst to even his own servants, Fraz-Urb'luu is saving most of his energy to be channeled into his staff when he succeeds in reassembling it. Upon its completion, the full extent of his power will be realized, and he can use the staff to restore and sustain the rest of his domain.

Inhabitants

Several lesser demons had created their own small empires within his realm while Fraz-Urb'luu was imprisoned. The prince laid most of these to waste with little effort upon reclaiming custody of Hollow's Heart, but pockets of resistance remain. He is unwilling to spend energy and resources defeating more entrenched foes if they do not represent an immediate threat, certain that when his staff is again whole he will punish them appropriately.

Many of the lesser demons of Hollow's Heart, and even some of the once-trusted rakshasa governors, grew accustomed to the lack of rule in Fraz-Urb'luu's absence and reveled in the exceptional chaos that reigned during that time. Although they dare not approach Zoragmelok, they marshal their forces in the hope that a day will come when they can usurp the Prince of Deception. These pretenders to the throne are hardly hospitable hosts, but visitors to the 176th layer can sometimes find common ground among them in a shared hatred for the realm's ruler.

During Fraz-Urb'luu's time away, a rakshasa dubbed himself "The High and Holy Rajah," and the demons he governed were put to work constructing a new city. The place called Ketilon was built of a gold-flecked stone mined from another layer of the Abyss and is immune to being destroyed by the demon prince's whims. Located on the shores of one of the few remaining oceans in Hollow's Heart, the port city exploits the fact that the ocean meets with the Astral Sea, allowing passage out of the Abyss. Ships frequently come and go, ferrying "pilgrims" from the material world who have come to worship the Rajah as a living god. Upon arriving in Ketilon, the pilgrims become prey for the rajah and his demonic subjects.

Some packs of demons fled other layers when Hollow's Heart was unprotected, but the return of Fraz-Urb'luu stranded them. Knowing the torments the demon prince surely has in store for them when they are captured, many of these creatures are desperate, willing to trade their knowledge of the layer for a means to escape. Some turn to Ugudenk, the Squirming King, who has burrowed into a corner of Hollow's Heart from the 177th layer. His warren of endless tunnels leads to the Writhing Realm, but few seeking passage along this route find their way to anything but his gaping maw.

Adventure Hooks

Epic-tier characters can unearth the Prince of Deception's schemes and directly confront Fraz-Urb'luu. Even though they are most likely to deal with his most powerful servants outside Hollow's Heart, they must travel there to battle the demon prince, who is unwilling to expose himself anywhere else.

- In collecting fragments of the *Staff of Fraz-Urb'luu*, the characters have gained the prince's attention. Fraz-Urb'luu sends agents to monitor them and deliberately passes information about them to his rivals. When the heroes are beset by these demonic forces, they must determine why Fraz-Urb'luu seems intent on losing control of the pieces that he should so desperately want. Or is this scenario nothing more than a deception?
- A kingdom is being overtaken by a zealous movement that reveres the High and Holy Rajah. Its

cities begin to empty as "pilgrimage cruises" depart daily for the holy land of Karantis. The heroes must travel to Hollow's Heart to save the pilgrims and defeat their false god.

- The party is contacted by the Mother of Witches, Iggwilv. Although she has not discerned exactly what the Prince of Deception is up to, she believes he is nearly ready to exact his revenge on his rivals, including her. She seeks the party's assistance in destroying Fraz-Urb'luu, because allying herself with another demon prince would upset the balance of power in the Abyss just as much as allowing Fraz-Urb'luu to regain his former status.

The Staff of Fraz-Urb'luu

The *Staff of Fraz-Urb'luu* consists of four pieces: two roughly equal halves of the wooden staff itself, a bestial claw of adamantine to top the staff, and a crystal that sits within the claw. Unlike other artifacts, the staff is intended to come into play during the heroic tier and accompany its wielder through to the epic tier as more pieces are acquired. Fraz-Urb'luu is currently in possession of the crystal.

Staff of Fraz-Urb'luu — **Heroic to Epic Tier**

This broken staff fragment is clearly part of a larger whole, yet its well-worn sheen hints at guarded power.

Implement: Rod, staff, or wand
Enhancement Bonus: Attack rolls and damage rolls
Critical: +1d8 damage per plus

Property

You gain an item bonus to Arcana, Bluff, and Intimidate checks equal to the item's enhancement bonus.

Lore

Arcana DC 23: The *Staff of Fraz-Urb'luu* was lost during the sack of Hollow's Heart after the demon prince was imprisoned in the natural world. Unable to destroy it, his enemies sundered it into pieces. Even individually, however, the fragments contain their creator's malicious love of deception and potent summoning ability.

Arcana DC 31: A great deal of Fraz-Urb'luu's personal power is contained within the staff, but only when it is whole. Reassembling the staff could enable a wielder to usurp control of the 176th layer of the Abyss or potentially destroy the demon prince forever.

Goals of the Staff

- Be reunited as a complete entity.
- Return to Fraz-Urb'luu to rule over Hollow's Heart.
- Lead unsuspecting mortals down the path of ruin.

Roleplaying the Staff

Each fragment of the staff communicates telepathically with its possessor but frequently attempts to deceive that person. Its preferred method of deception is to claim to be a human soul trapped in the fragment along with the spirits of demons. It encourages the wielder to commit acts of evil while seeking out the other pieces of the staff but, if it is confronted about the evil deeds, it blames the influence of the "demons" inside it while the "human" continues to plead for freedom. If its wielder is willing to aid the staff, it interacts more openly with that individual.

Concordance

In addition to seeking out and joining other pieces of the staff to itself, each segment of the artifact delights in acts of dishonesty. Regardless of other conditions, the artifact's maximum concordance is determined by the number of pieces that have been gathered and assembled by a single owner.

Starting score	**5**
Owner gains a level	**+1**
Each fragment joined to the first	**+5**
Owner tricks a good creature into performing an evil act (max 1/day)	**+2**
Owner does not follow up on information about other staff pieces (max 1/day)	**-1**
Owner admits to the staff's true nature	**-2**

Number of Pieces	Maximum Concordance
One	6
Two	12
Three	16
Four	20

Pleased (16–20)

"The staff and I are meant to rule over greater beings, but I will not forsake my companions . . . trust me."

The staff might find more comfort from being in the hands of Fraz-Urb'luu, but it is all too eager to trick and destroy demons and mortals while performing as an instrument of its current wielder.

Properties

- The item functions as a +4 *implement*, increasing to +5 if you are 20th level or higher, and to +6 if you are 25th level or higher and the item's concordance is 17 or higher.
- Once per day, you can perform the Summon Demon ritual with no need for components. This item functions as the ritual's focus.

Utility Power (Charm) ✦ **Daily** (Minor Action)

Effect: Until the end of your next turn, enemies cannot attack you or target you with any effect that targets an enemy. An enemy ignores this effect if you attack it, if it is marked by you, or if it is in your defender aura.

Satisfied (12–15)

"I have reached an understanding with this staff now. You need not concern yourself with its motives."

The staff is eager to be completed. It spends less time manipulating its wielder and more time seeking to aid the quest to complete the artifact.

Properties
- ✦ The item functions as a +3 *implement*, increasing to +4 if you are 16th level or higher.
- ✦ The item bonus to skill checks also applies to Diplomacy.

Attack Power ✦ Encounter (No Action)
Trigger: You hit a target with a charm power using this item.
Effect: You slide the target up to a number of squares equal to the item's enhancement bonus, and the target grants combat advantage to you until the end of your next turn.

Normal (5–11)

"I've told you, this staff is less remarkable than you think, now stop asking about it!"

The staff periodically lies to the wielder to get its way and encourages the wielder to do the same with others.

Property
The item functions as a +2 *implement*, increasing to +3 if you are 6th level or higher.

Utility Power (Illusion) ✦ **Daily** (Standard Action)
Effect: You become invisible until you hit or miss with an attack, or until the end of your next turn.

Unsatisfied (1–4)

"I'm not so sure I trust you, or anyone. You tell me one thing, but the staff tells me another."

Subtly, the staff tries to convince its wielder to abandon any companions who are unwilling to pursue its agenda. The staff pretends nothing is wrong while it surreptitiously attempts to manipulate events so that it falls into hands that are more willing or compliant. The staff continues to function as if its attitude were normal, but it gains the following property that the DM can use secretly.

Property
The item uses telepathy 10 to communicate with others and manipulate them into acting against its wielder.

Angered (0 or lower)

"No! I won't lie for you anymore!"

The staff secretly hampers its wielder and uses its abilities to convince others that its owner is a dangerous liar who must be stopped. The staff continues to behave as if its attitude were unsatisfied, but it gains the following property that the DM must use secretly.

Property
The item provides no item bonus to any skill checks. Instead, the user takes a -4 penalty to Arcana, Bluff, Diplomacy, and Intimidate checks.

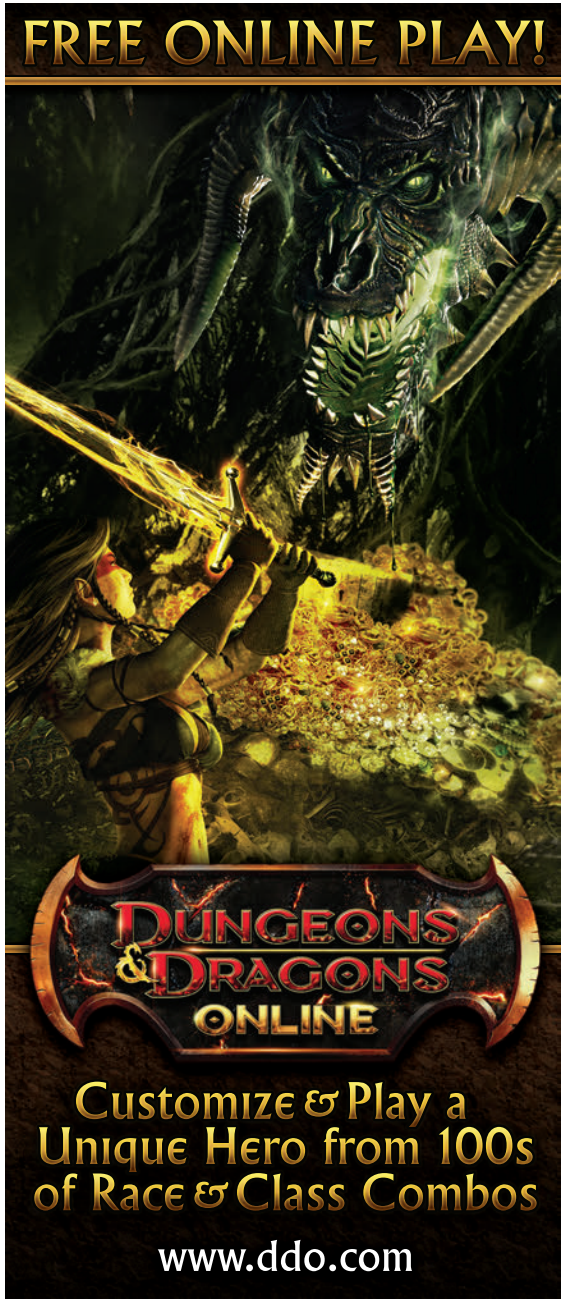
Moving On

"It's all been a lie!"

A demon of a level equal to the wielder's level + 1d4 appears at a most inopportune time (the middle of a dangerous battle, during a tense negotiation) and attacks the possessor of the staff until it acquires the item or it is destroyed. If the demon is successful, it and the staff return to the Abyss; otherwise another demon appears one week later.

About the Author

John "Ross" Rossomangno is a freelance writer whose most recent work for *D&D Insider* includes "Pearl of the Sea Mother" and "The Iggwilv-Graz'zt Affair." Over the course of thirty years of gaming, he has always had a soft spot for villains or, at least, has always found their stories to be the most interesting. More about the author can be found on his website: BrokenBinding.com.



Elves with Demonic Designs

The Fey'ri: Faerûn's Hidden Threat

By Erik Scott de Bie

Illustrations by Sean Murray

The fey'ri trace their heritage to interbreeding between elves and demons to produce powerful offspring and perfected bloodlines. They are half-mad with frustration after millennia of imprisonment and because of their belief that they have been denied their birthright. Their elven pride and innate demonic viciousness make them a scourge among the civilized realms as they work their subterfuge.

Descendants of ancient elf houses befouled by interbreeding with demons, the daemonfey—and their lesser spawn, the fey'ri—burrow into the foundations of mortal society in Faerûn, seeking to sow chaos and have their revenge against elvenkind first of all, and anyone else second. Members of the race can be found the world over, operating alone or in isolated small cells, often manipulating members of "lesser races" to do their bidding.

Dark Lineage: The first daemonfey were born from House Dlardrageth in long-ago Earlann (what is now the great forest kingdom Cormanthor). The elders of the house summoned demons to beget half-fiend children, some of whom in turn produced lesser demon-touched elves called fey'ri. They transmitted the corruption to other, lesser houses of the elven realm of Siluvanede, spawning an entire race of demonic fey.

A People out of Time: The Dlardrageths committed their atrocities centuries ago. Soon afterward, their fellow elves defeated them and imprisoned the few surviving daemonfey and a small army of fey'ri in permanent magical stasis. They escaped in 1369 DR, and though they have had the intervening century to adjust, many fey'ri still view this new world as strange and difficult. To make matters worse for them, their leaders (Sarya Dlardrageth, her son, Ryvvik, and her nephew, Xhalph) vanished only a few years later when they were at the head of a fey'ri attack on the fledgling kingdom of Cormanthor, leaving the surviving fey'ri directionless in a foreign land.

Quest for Ancient Relics: In Faerûn today, the daemonfey and their fey'ri relations operate mostly as individuals or in small groups. They don't have the collective strength and organization to mount a full-scale incursion, but they are far from helpless. All fey'ri know about the heritage of Dlardrageth, including the caches that the house created to store its most prized treasures. Those storage places have been looted over the centuries, meaning that the items the fey'ri believe to be their possessions are now back in the world at large. No member of the race will pass up an opportunity to visit a curio shop or some other

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purveyor of "antiques," in the hope of discovering one of the long-lost relics.

Masters of Disguise: Fey'ri lie, cheat, and spin webs of deception to get their way. With their natural ability to change their face and shape, they often hide in plain sight or impersonate enemies so as to frame them for criminal activity. Blackmail is one of the fey'ri's favorite devices, its use enhanced by their natural ability to conceal their true features. One of the best manipulators among the fey'ri is the skin-dancer Dalthira, who makes her living in the city of Neverwinter as a professional "character assassin." She wears a different face every day and enjoys tricking noble scions and merchant heirs into compromising situations.

Fey'ri Skin-Dancer **Level 6 Lurker**
Medium fey humanoid XP 250

HP 55; **Bloodied** 27 **Initiative** +9
AC 20, **Fortitude** 17, **Reflex** 20, **Will** 18 **Perception** +8
Speed 6 Darkvision

Standard Actions

⊕ **Claw** ✦ **At-Will**
Attack: Melee 1 (one creature); +11 vs. AC
Hit: 2d6 + 7 damage.

⸸ **Treachery Revealed** ✦ **Recharge** when the skin-dancer uses *confusing target*
Attack: Melee 1 (one creature); +11 vs. AC
Hit: 2d6 + 10 damage, and the target is weakened (save ends).

✧ **Confusing Target** (polymorph, teleportation) ✦ **Recharge** when the skin-dancer uses *treachery revealed*
Attack: Close burst 5 (one creature in the burst); +9 vs. Will
Hit: The skin-dancer assumes the form of the target, and can immediately teleport itself and the target, swapping places. Creatures must make a DC 28 Insight check to distinguish between the skin-dancer and the target. The effect ends after the skin-dancer makes an attack or at the end of the encounter.

Minor Actions

Change Shape (polymorph) ✦ **At-Will**
Effect: The skin-dancer alters its physical form to appear as a Medium humanoid until it uses this power again or until it drops to 0 hit points. To assume a specific individual's form, the skin-dancer must have seen that individual. Other creatures can make a DC 28 Insight check to discern that the form is a disguise.

Skills Bluff +10, Stealth +10
Str 10 (+3) **Dex** 14 (+5) **Wis** 10 (+3)
Con 13 (+4) **Int** 18 (+7) **Cha** 15 (+5)
Alignment chaotic evil **Languages** Abyssal, Common, Elven

Fey'ri Marauder **Level 8 Brute**
Large elemental humanoid XP 350

HP 110; **Bloodied** 55 **Initiative** +6
AC 20, **Fortitude** 21, **Reflex** 20, **Will** 19 **Perception** +9
Speed 6 Darkvision

Standard Actions

⊕ **Burning Broadsword** (fire, weapon) ✦ **At-Will**
Attack: Melee 2 (one creature); +13 vs. AC
Hit: 2d10 + 5 damage, and ongoing 5 fire damage (save ends).

⊕ **Claw** ✦ **At-Will**
Attack: Melee 2 (one creature); +13 vs. AC
Hit: 2d12 + 7 damage.

⸸ **Sword and Claw** ✦ **Recharge** when first bloodied
Effect: The marauder uses *burning broadsword* once and *claw* once. If both attacks hit the same target, the target also falls prone.

Minor Actions

Change Shape (polymorph) ✦ **At-Will**
Effect: The marauder alters its physical form to appear as a Medium humanoid until it uses this power again or until it drops to 0 hit points. To assume a specific individual's form, the marauder must have seen that individual. Other creatures can make a DC 31 Insight check to discern that the form is a disguise.

Triggered Actions

⸸ **Fiendish Rend** ✦ **At-Will** (1/round)
Trigger: The marauder bloodies an enemy or reduces an enemy to 0 hit points or fewer.
Effect (Free Action): The marauder makes a melee basic attack against a target other than the triggering enemy.

Variable Resistance ✦ **2/Encounter**
Trigger: The marauder takes acid, cold, fire, lightning, or thunder damage.
Effect (Free Action): The marauder gains resist 5 to the triggering damage type until the end of the encounter or until it uses this power again.

Skills Athletics +12, Endurance +14
Str 16 (+7) **Dex** 15 (+6) **Wis** 10 (+4)
Con 20 (+9) **Int** 8 (+3) **Cha** 12 (+5)
Alignment chaotic evil **Languages** Abyssal, Common, Elven
Equipment 2 broadswords

Reviving a Dying House: One of the most important facets of a fey'ri's existence is its pedigree. Most fey'ri can describe their family tree in exacting detail, tracing their bloodline to Sarya or one of the other nobles of House Dlardrageth. For this reason, fey'ri are insular when it comes to weakening their "superior" bloodline. They usually restrict their breeding activities to other fey'ri or the occasional elf (preferably of demonstrable Cormanthor heritage). A few fey'ri—after the purges that followed Sarya's revolt and a century spent in hiding—are amenable to breeding with elves of various backgrounds, resulting in less "pure" fey'ri. Most fey'ri take grievous offense to this tainting of their legacy and often attack such "mutts" on sight.

The Last Heir: Most of the fey'ri consider themselves leaderless (beyond whatever hierarchy might exist in the small cells they have formed). Some look optimistically upon a powerful noble daemonfey called Lilianviaten, or "Lilten," believing that he is or will become the Last Heir—Sarya's successor as the leader of the race. Legend identifies Lilten as a Dlardrageth prince—one of the house's original nobles—and the older brother of Sarya herself, and says that he escaped imprisonment in Earlann and passed undiscovered for thousands of years.

Warrior, bard, and priest, Lilten is sometimes called "Changecloak" because of his often-shifting loyalties, exemplified by his betrayal of his former patron, Erevan Ilesere, the elven god of mischief, in favor of Beshaba, goddess of misfortune.

While many fey'ri are not willing to believe that Lilten is the Last Heir (else why would he have not come forward before now?), others actively hope for the revelation of this prophesied sovereign of their blood, believing that event to be a precursor to the restoration of their race. When he is asked whether

Fey'ri blood sorcerer and Dlardrageth prince

there is any truth to the tales about him, Lilten only smiles slyly.

A Thousand Shifting Faces: It is often said the fey'ri resemble elves the way tieflings resemble humans, but one should not make the observation aloud to one of them: fey'ri bristle at the suggestion that they are an offshoot of the elf race. The chaotic nature of their ancestry ensures that no two fey'ri look quite alike, though common features include horns, fangs, forked tongues, and barbed tails. A breed of fey'ri descended from a worshiper of Beshaba is marked with the graceful antlers that characterize the goddess of mischief. Some fey'ri manifest multiple arms, wings, or even more demonic characteristics, often evidencing a mixture of demonic heritages. The fey'ri marauder known as Mogwyn inherited her build and her six arms from her mighty father Baron Xhalph, nephew of Sarya (and the son of a marilith), and her great beauty and cunning from her seductress mother Talya Floshin, who some believed to be a daughter of the demon prince Graz'zt.

By contrast, some fey'ri don't manifest obvious demonic features, and those who look "normal" are perhaps the most dangerous of all. Some fey'ri are born and raised among their elf cousins and do not even know the truth of their nature. It inevitably manifests, however—usually violently—when the fledgling fey'ri comes of age.

Masters of Ancient Arcana: Fey'ri have a strong talent for magic. The more traditional among them sometimes practice bladesong, an ability that marked them as among the greatest warriors in the Crown Wars. Most if not all fey'ri have the natural ability to change shape, which they use to hide in polite society and advance their aims. The weakest fey'ri generally have one or two demonic abilities, such as producing flame or launching into a fiendish rage at the slightest provocation, while those of stronger bloodlines might be able to drain life from their foes or shrug off blades or spells.

Fey'ri Blood Sorcerer	**Level 20 Controller**
Medium fey humanoid	XP 2,800
HP 187; **Bloodied** 93	**Initiative** +12
AC 34, **Fortitude** 32, **Reflex** 30, **Will** 34	**Perception** +13
Speed 6	Darkvision

Standard Actions

Demonic Whip (fire, necrotic, weapon) ✦ **At-Will**
Attack: Melee 2 (one creature); +25 vs. AC
Hit: 4d4 + 8 damage, and ongoing 10 fire and necrotic damage (save ends).

Bloodflame Spear (fire, necrotic) ✦ **At-Will**
Attack: Ranged 20 (one creature); +23 vs. Reflex
Hit: 3d8 + 10 fire and necrotic damage, and the target is dazed (save ends).

Bloodseeking Hurricane (necrotic, zone) ✦ **Encounter**
Attack: Area burst 2 within 10 (enemies in the burst); +23 vs. Fortitude
Hit: 3d6 + 8 necrotic damage, and the target falls prone.
Effect: The burst creates a zone that lasts until the end of the sorcerer's next turn. The zone is difficult terrain for enemies, and any creature that enters the zone or ends its turn there takes 10 necrotic damage. A creature can take this damage only once per turn.
Sustain Minor: The zone persists until the end of the sorcerer's next turn, and the sorcerer can move the zone up to 3 squares.

Move Actions

Fey'ri Deception (teleportation) ✦ **Encounter**
Effect: The sorcerer teleports up to 6 squares and is invisible until it hits or misses with an attack or until the end of its next turn.

Minor Actions

Change Shape (polymorph) ✦ **At-Will**
Effect: The sorcerer alters its physical form to appear as a Medium humanoid until it uses this power again or until it drops to 0 hit points. To assume a specific individual's form, the sorcerer must have seen that individual. Other creatures can make a DC 35 Insight check to discern that the form is a disguise.

Skills Arcana +18, Bluff +20, Endurance +19, Insight +18

Str 16 (+13)	**Dex** 15 (+12)	**Wis** 16 (+13)
Con 19 (+14)	**Int** 16 (+13)	**Cha** 20 (+15)

Alignment chaotic evil **Languages** Abyssal, Common, Elven
Equipment robes, whip

Dlardrageth Prince	**Level 21 Elite Skirmisher**
Medium elemental humanoid	XP 6,400
HP 404; **Bloodied** 202	**Initiative** +17
AC 35, **Fortitude** 32, **Reflex** 34, **Will** 32	**Perception** +19
Speed 6	Darkvision
Saving Throws +2; **Action Points** 1	

Standard Actions

Daemonfey Blade (necrotic, thunder, weapon) ✦ **At-Will**
Attack: Melee 1 (one creature); +26 vs. AC
Hit: 2d8 + 10 damage. In addition, one creature within 10 squares of the prince takes 10 necrotic and thunder damage.

Bladesong Crescendo (teleportation) ✦ **At-Will**
Effect: The prince uses *daemonfey blade* twice, teleporting up to 3 squares before each attack.

Minor Actions

Clarion Challenge ✦ **At-Will** (1/round)
Attack: Close burst 5 (enemies in the burst); +24 vs. Will
Hit: The prince pulls the target up to 4 squares.

Change Shape (polymorph) ✦ **At-Will**
Effect: The prince alters its physical form to appear as a Medium humanoid until he uses this power again or until he drops to 0 hit points. To assume a specific individual's form, the prince must have seen that individual. Other creatures can make a DC 40 Insight check to discern that the form is a disguise.

Triggered Actions

Bladesong Warding (necrotic, thunder) ✦ **At-Will** (1/turn)
Trigger: An enemy within 2 squares of the prince makes an attack that does not include the prince as a target.
Effect (Free Action): The target takes 15 necrotic and thunder damage.

Variable Resistance ✦ **2/Encounter**
Trigger: The prince takes acid, cold, fire, lightning, or thunder damage.
Effect (Free Action): The prince gains resist 20 to the triggering damage type until the end of the encounter or until he uses this power again.

Skills Arcana +23, Athletics +21, Bluff +21

Str 22 (+16)	**Dex** 20 (+15)	**Wis** 18 (+14)
Con 26 (+18)	**Int** 26 (+18)	**Cha** 22 (+16)

Alignment chaotic evil **Languages** Abyssal, Common, Elven
Equipment longsword

One of the fey'ri most accomplished at wielding arcane power is Lord Pharnth, a member of the group who refer to themselves as blood sorcerers. He combines fey magic with blood and bone to produce formidable and persistent ill effects.

Uneasy Allies: Fey'ri often act with antagonism toward anyone and everyone, but it is possible to earn their trust. They respond well to intelligence, strength, and power, as well as a certain moral flexibility. They dislike those who delude themselves into thinking themselves equal to the fey'ri, but they love to compete with worthy rivals. Seeing through the disguise of a skin-dancer on multiple occasions without attacking often draws the fey'ri's attention, offering interesting or witty creatures the chance to prove themselves worthy of an alliance. Often, the skin-dancer Dalthira will play along with a clever stranger, even if she knows doing so is dangerous (such as if her "friend" means to betray her) simply because she revels in generating chaos. On the other hand, a fey'ri of much greater repute, such as someone who might qualify as the Last Heir, considers only how someone might serve his or her purposes, and this fey'ri will discard a "friend" the instant that person ceases to be useful or becomes even a minor annoyance.

Dueling with the Daemonfey: Fey'ri vary widely in their abilities and skills. Dalthira rarely shows her true face to anyone—at least not before their last few breaths. In a conflict, she surrounds herself with allies and uses *confusing target* to throw off enemies, sticking close to her assumed double. Once the jig is up, the skin-dancer uses *treachery revealed* to punish enemies that see through her guise.

A fey'ri marauder like Mogwyn is a much more straightforward opponent, because she trusts her multiple arms and massive build to carry her to victory.

As a fey'ri blood sorcerer, Lord Pharnth draws magical strength from his tainted bloodline. He wields a bloody whip that feasts greedily on the life of his foes.

Finally, a Dlardrageth prince like Lilten is a noble if ruthless combatant, preferring to defeat foes one at a time while punishing cowards and the unworthy with his twisted bladesong and his ancient blade forged for use in the legendary Crown Wars.

About the Author

Erik Scott de Bie is a speculative fiction writer best known for his work in the Forgotten Realms® campaign setting, including the third novel in the Shadowbane series, *Shadowbane: Eye of Justice*. His work has also appeared in numerous anthologies, including *Realms of the Elves*, *Realms of the Dead*, *When the Hero Comes Home* (and its sequel, *When the Villain Comes Home*), and *Human for a Day*. He moonlights as a game designer, contributing to the *The Shadowfell: Gloomwrought and Beyond*™ boxed set and the *Neverwinter*™ *Campaign Setting*, as well as the tie-in D&D Encounters™ season, *The Lost Crown of Neverwinter*™.

Prisoners of the Iron Flask

By Derek Guder

Illustration by Sam Carr

Foolishly, mortals have always tried to truck with demons, devils, and forces from beyond the natural world. They summon, bind, and bargain with these dangerous entities. One ancient, simple method of imprisoning and commanding such a creature is to trap it in an *iron flask*, to be bound into service and released later.

This practice usually leads to the flask's owner being betrayed or killed by its unwilling servant, but that fact does little to deter the ambitious and unwise. Stories of *iron flasks* make clear the high cost of ambition free of restraint and the inevitable treachery of evil.

To Catch a Demon

An *iron flask* looks like a palm-sized urn crafted of simple, heavy iron without much decoration. The stopper is often a brass plug adorned with intricate runes and sigils. Cheaper and less reliable flasks vary in appearance, a sign that they might be more dangerous to employ than usual.

An *iron flask* can be used to trap almost any nonnatural creature, though it is usually turned against demons, devils, and elementals. Those most tempted by the flask's power also seem to be prone to dealing with nefarious forces.

When the command word is spoken, the owner of an empty flask can try to capture an otherworldly target in the container. Most flasks can hold only one prisoner at a time. At any time, the owner can speak the command word again to free the captive, which must obey the owner's orders for a short period of service. After fulfilling its duties, the servant is free to depart. Once a creature is freed, it is impossible to trap the same one again for more than a year, and most creatures do not forget their wounded pride. Many tales involving an *iron flask* end with a former prisoner returning to extract vengeance on the flask's owner for the indignities it suffered.

If the flask's stopper is removed without the command word being spoken, the prisoner is released with no obligations. Most creatures freed in this way are quite angry at having been confined and are eager to vent their rage on anyone unfortunate enough to be nearby.

Anyone who knows the command word for an *iron flask* can tell whether it is empty or it contains a prisoner, but there is no way to determine the exact identity of the captive without releasing it.

Rumors speak of especially powerful *iron flasks* that can trap even the strongest outsiders. The original *Iron Flask of Tuerny the Merciless* is said to be an artifact that has a mind of its own—or perhaps is controlled by whatever being is trapped within it. Some believe that an occupied flask can fuel dangerous rituals, and treasure hunters seek the urns for that reason.

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Iron flasks are not common items, but they are well known to mighty arcanists, particularly those who deal with demons, devils, elementals, and their ilk. Knowledgeable patrons and organizations, eager to use the flasks to advance their plans, hire adventurers to recover them from lost treasure troves or steal them from the collections of rivals.

Many inferior copies of *iron flasks* have been crafted over the centuries, giving the items a tainted reputation. If you want to increase the risk of using a flask, you could give it a curse or a chance to fail outright (such as a cumulative 5 percent chance of failure each time it attempts to capture the same target).

The statistics below represent a standard *iron flask* that is well crafted and holds one prisoner at a time.

Iron Flask Level 26 Rare

This metal urn, closed with an engraved brass stopper, is surprisingly heavy despite being small enough to fit into the palm of a human hand.

Wondrous Item 1,125,000 gp

Attack Power (Charm) ✦ **Daily** (Standard Action)

Requirement: The flask has no creature trapped inside it.

Attack: Ranged 5 (one creature with an origin other than natural); +29 vs. Will

Hit: The target is removed from play (save ends).

First and Second Failed Saving Throw: Unless you lose a healing surge as a free action, the failed saving throw is instead a success.

Third Failed Saving Throw: The target is trapped in the flask until the bearer of the flask frees the target as a standard action or until the flask is destroyed. While in the flask, the target is removed from play, and it doesn't age or need to breathe, eat, or drink. When the target is released, it appears in an unoccupied square adjacent to the flask, and the target is dominated by the flask's bearer until the end of the encounter or until the bearer ends the domination as a minor action. The released target cannot be affected by an *iron flask* again for a year and a day.

Miss: The power is not expended.

THE IRON FLASK OF TUERNY THE MERCILESS

The first *iron flask* was created by Tuerny the Merciless, a tyrannical wizard who ruled a kingdom through mental control and armies supplemented with summoned demons. Always desperate for greater power, he crafted the magic item and trapped the great Graz'zt within it.

Inevitably, the demon lord turned on the wizard at a dramatic moment and dragged Tuerny back to the Abyss, where he was transformed into a dretch as punishment. That was not the end of his story, though; Tuerny survived and was promoted to a nalfeshnee. He helped free Iggwilv from Graz'zt's prison, and the two formed a brief and ill-fated alliance to conquer the world.

The *Iron Flask of Tuerny the Merciless* was thought to have been lost but is rumored to have reappeared over the centuries. A remote monastery claimed to be guarding the flask, keeping it out of the hands of those who would abuse its power. Iggwilv herself is also said to possess it. The flask supposedly contains a portion of Demogorgon's might, allowing the Mother of Witches to spy on mighty demon lords without being detected. The true fate of the flask might be forever lost to the ages.

Random Prisoners

If you want to introduce an *iron flask* into your game, you can use the following tables to create one randomly or simply pick options that best fit the campaign. Because the flask holds only a single captive, rolling on the tables might not result in a balanced encounter. To create a full encounter out of the release of a prisoner, you can add other monsters, craft an environment that significantly helps the prisoner, or increase the prisoner's level. Other options include turning the creature into an elite or solo monster or allowing the flask to contain a higher-level monster, such as a pit fiend (level 26) or balor (level 27).

Almost all the creatures, themes, and templates in these tables were first published in a variety of rulebooks and supplements, including the *Monster Manual*®; the *Dungeon Master's Guide*®; *Book of Vile Darkness*™; *Demonomicon*™; *Manual of the Planes*™; *Monster Manual 2*; *Monster Manual 3*; *The Plane Above: Secrets of the Astral Sea*™; *The Plane Below: Secrets of the Elemental Chaos*; and *Dungeon Master's Guide 2*. (Exceptions are noted where they occur.) Most of this information is also available online in the D&D Compendium.

PRISONER

d%	Creature (level)
01-50	None; to create an occupied flask, roll again
51	Fire demon (18)
52	Bebilith (18)
53	Indwelling devil (18)
54	Barbed devil (18)
55	Ash-wrought soulburner (19)
56	Rakshasa noble (19)
57	Goristro (19)
58	Mavawhan (19)
59	Nalfeshnee swine guard (20)
60	Ice devil (gelugon) (20)
61	Djinn thunderer (20)
62	Armanite lancer (20)
63	Haures (20)
64	Nabassu (20)
65	Shaadee (20)
66	Kazrith (20)
67	Quarrak (21)
68	Unbound balor (21) (from *Dragon* 377)
69	War devil (malebranche) (22)
70	Djinn windbow (22)
71	Efreet fireblade (22)
72	City corruptor (evanissu) (22)
73	Jarrlak (22)
74	Nycademon (22)
75	Ultrodemon schemer (22)
76	Hezrou (22)
77	Corruption devil (22)
78	Infernal girallon (22)
79	Astral stalker (22)
80	Efreet cinderlord (23)
81	Efreet flamestrider (23)
82	Storm devil (23)
83	Hellwasp devil (23)
84	Glabrezu (23)
85	Nabassu deathwing (23)
86	Nalfeshnee tyrant (23)
87	Rakshasa dread knight (24)
88	Djinn cloudstalker (24)
89	Djinn stormsword (24)
90	Assassin devil (24)
91	Marilith (24)
92	Bonegouge assassin (24)
93	Ferrolith (24)
94	Seszrath (24)
95	Hezrou mangler (24)
96	Draegloth abomination (24)
97	Efreet pyresinger (25)
98	Voracalith (25)
99	Pillager devil (25)
100	Djinn skylord (25)

THEMES AND TEMPLATES

d%	Theme or Template
01-05	Demogorgon cultist
06	Feywild denizen
07-11	Legion of Avernus
12-16	Lolth's chosen
17-21	Orcus blood cultist
22	Snaketongue cultist
23-27	Those who hear
28-32	Tiamat's red hand
33	Beast of Demogorgon
34	Champion of Bane
35	Chaos warrior
36	Dragontouched destroyer
37	Grizzled veteran
38	Hellbound soldier
39	Mad alchemist
40	Slithering idol
41	Spectral assassin
42	Spiderblessed spinner
43-47	Baphomet's Horned Legion
48-52	Faithful of Graz'zt
53-57	Kostchtchie's Winter Host
58-62	Oublivae's Ruinlords
63-67	Pazuzu's Dread Flock
68-72	Yeenoghu's Death Pack
73-77	Zuggtmoy's Rot Cultists
78-82	Chaos beast
83-87	Devotee of darkness
88-92	Doomdreamer
93	Maenad
94	Moilian dead
95-99	Slave to the Nine Hells; roll d10 to determine specific theme
100	Roll twice and apply both

Themes and Templates

After selecting the imprisoned creature, you can roll on the Themes and Templates table to determine the creature's history and goals. Every captive of an *iron flask* has a story to tell. At some point, someone defeated the creature and trapped it inside the urn. What was it trying to do before it was captured? Was it imprisoned in the flask as punishment? What does it want to do after being released?

Feel free to diverge from a monster's stereotype to surprise the player characters and emphasize that the prisoner in the flask is not just any creature—someone trapped it for a reason. Keep in mind that complete randomization might lead to paradoxical combinations, such as a marilith with the slave to the Nine Hells theme, a corruption devil that is one of Lolth's chosen, or an efreet slithering idol. You can ignore such incongruous matches, or you can use them as inspiration to further develop the history and circumstances of the prisoner.

The themes provided are skewed heavily toward demonic influence. Make adjustments if you want a creature that is devilish, elemental, or something else altogether.

Legendary Prisoners

Perhaps instead of determining the occupant of an *iron flask* randomly, you prefer to have the urn contain a high-level legendary prisoner to challenge the party (or to throw a monkey wrench into an otherwise straightforward storyline: "Everything was going fine until we freed Orcus!"). You can roll on the Legendary Prisoners table below or fill the *iron flask* with a demon lord or god that is more appropriate for your campaign.

LEGENDARY PRISONERS

d10	Prisoner (level)
1	Baphomet (28)
2	Dagon (32)
3	Demogorgon (34)
4	Graz'zt (32)
5	Kostchtchie (31)
6	Ogrémoch (34)
7	Orcus (33)
8	Pazuzu (33)
9	Yeenoghu (28) (from *Dragon* Annual 2009)
10	Zuggtmoy (22)

Adventure Seeds

Below are six sample prisoners, complete with adventure seeds. They are numbered so that you can easily select one randomly.

1. The Chained Idol

A twisted yuan-ti cult has venerated a prisoner of an *iron flask* for centuries. The trapped marilith (which is named Toavenkii and has the slithering idol template) has no interest in leading the cult's debased services and desperately wants freedom. It has been whispering to some of the more weak-willed members, simultaneously driving the cult to be more aggressive in raiding and more lax with security. Survivors who have escaped the cult spread tales far and wide.

2. The Helpful Assassin

An assassin devil was sent to the natural world to slay a mortal wizard whose soul belonged to the Nine Hells. The arcanist had been unnaturally extending his life for some time, and his former patrons had run out of patience.

Unfortunately for the devil, the wizard was prepared and trapped it in an *iron flask*. Over the years, the urn passed through multiple hands and eventually ended up in the possession of a group of sturdy adventurers.

The player characters are in an interesting situation. The prisoner of their *iron flask* speaks of untold riches waiting in the tower of a cruel and twisted wizard. It would be more than happy to guide the party through the tower's traps and wards, leading the group to the inner sanctum. All the characters must do is release the prisoner once they find the wizard—assuming, of course, that the occupant of the flask is telling the truth.

3. The Twinless One

The diminutive quarrak demons are born as twins. When one dies, the other soon follows suit. But when one is trapped in an *iron flask*, the other discovers that it is free from constantly fighting with its twin.

Qiiv came to this realization when its twin Keev ran afoul of a higher-ranking demon and was imprisoned in a flask. At first, Qiiv was ecstatic at its newfound freedom from the incessantly annoying Keev. But the quarrak couldn't bear to be too far from the *iron flask*, so it stole the item and fled. Then the careless demon lost the urn somewhere along the way and has no idea of its current location.

Qiiv wants to be reunited with his beloved and hated twin, so it hunts for the *iron flask*, leading a small horde of other quarraks. The demons worship Qiiv for being the "twinless chosen one," unaware that its twin is simply sealed away.

4. The Battle-Crazed Spider

Brackenbite, a haures, was touched by Lolth. The undead spider demon had marched at the front of her armies in countless battles and delighted in nothing so much as slaughter. Its happiness, as demons measure such things, was cut short when it was betrayed by an enterprising rival.

Trapped in an *iron flask*, Brackenbite was traded between drow houses as a token of power, respect, and prestige. None of the drow dared to open the stopper and release the haures, but they all lived under the threat that one of them might someday succumb to the temptation. That mutual fear—and the prospect of suffering brutal reprisals from the other houses—kept them in check.

The flask is a regular target of elaborate and subtle robberies. Currently, it is under the control of House Eilservs, but rival drow have decided to take a different tactic: hiring adventurers to acquire the urn directly.

Brackenbite's devotion to Lolth has grown during its centuries of imprisonment. The demon pays close attention to the drow machinations going on around it, always looking for signs of disloyalty—and of the traitor that sealed it away long ago.

5. The Former Servant

Ganarontel the nalfeshnee was a particularly lazy and incompetent example of its kind, so its lord trapped the bumbling demon in an *iron flask* to make an example of it. At first, Ganarontel made little effort to escape, but as the centuries mounted, it began to chafe in imprisonment and finally learned the burning drive of ambition.

Now a part of a self-important wizard's collection of artifacts, the demon reaches out to anyone nearby who might hear it and come to its aid. The nalfeshnee craves freedom and vengeance and is willing to bargain very dearly to achieve its goals.

Unfortunately for Ganarontel, its former lord has had a long and successful career of its own. Rumors say that the lord rose to become a balor. One minor demon even claimed that it eventually became the mighty prince Orcus.

Most people who have heard the story laugh off the idea. On the other hand, if it *were* true, the imprisoned nalfeshnee would know many of the demon prince's oldest and most closely guarded secrets. That would make the *iron flask* a priceless prize indeed.

6. The Purging Angel

As the Dawn War waned and the primordials were defeated, the angel Hadariel refused to let its enemies be bound, insisting that they were too dangerous to live. Instead, it advocated for the destruction of all primordials.

When Hadariel's objections were dismissed, the rogue angel went on its own crusade across the planes, hunting and killing agents of the primordials wherever it found them. Some effort was made to reign in the angel, but anyone sent after it ended up slain, and the gods soon turned back to their own plans.

Eons later, Hadariel learned of a mortal city that venerated the elements. It began to annihilate the place until a desperate wizard resident used an *iron flask* to trap the angel. The few survivors of the cataclysm banded together to form the Shield of Radiance, a secret society determined to guard the urn and prevent Hadariel's return.

Time was unkind to the group, and eventually it was broken, its members scattered, and the *iron flask* stolen. Now, the surviving members search for the urn, as do others—including those who wish to eradicate primordial influence, and primordial cults that mistakenly believe Hadariel to be a champion of the elemental lords. The imprisoned angel simply wants its freedom so it can resume its quest to purge the planes of all vestiges of primordial taint.

Using the Flask

An *iron flask* is relatively easy to work into any campaign that includes demons, devils, or similar otherworldly creatures. It can also be the mechanism for introducing such elements into a game.

You can use or adapt the ideas below to make an *iron flask* part of an existing campaign. They can also be combined with the sample prisoners and adventure seeds above.

A flask is a powerful item, so use it with caution. The container allows the player characters to remove a formidable enemy from the battlefield and turn it into a temporary ally. Once released, the creature is likely to hold a grudge for a long time (especially if it's immortal). If the heroes use the flask to subvert an enemy, they likely will face their foe again later.

The scenarios below are numbered for those who want to determine one randomly.

1. A Trapped Sage

The characters require a key piece of information to complete their quest. The only creature that possesses the knowledge is trapped in an *iron flask*. The party must find the flask, free the prisoner, and convince it to help—not to mention deal with the current owner of the flask and whoever imprisoned the creature in the first place.

This plot is a twist on the story of traveling to a sage to learn information. It also allows the use of an exotic or planar creature as the sage without requiring the adventurers to trek across the multiverse.

2. A Trapped Ally

A powerful ally that the characters have come to rely on (such as a friendly dragon or angel) has been trapped in an *iron flask*, requiring them to mount a rescue. Whatever villain imprisoned the creature is sure to oppose the party and might even command the captive to attack the heroes.

Adventurers who rely heavily on a specific nonplayer character are particularly susceptible to this turn of events. The scenario can remind them not to take an ally's assistance for granted.

3. A Trapped Villain

An *iron flask* can give the player characters the chance to talk to a dangerous villain without the immediate risk of violence. The encounter is a good opportunity for roleplaying or exposition.

If the trapped villain is an established enemy of the heroes, they might be tempted to exploit or subvert their foe. Even if they choose to leave the villain imprisoned, the mere presence of the *iron flask* can invite trouble. Perhaps the villain's minions are seeking the urn so they can release their master, or maybe other forces want to acquire the flask for their own purposes.

Alternatively, the player characters could find an *iron flask* that holds an unfamiliar entity. This scenario is a great way to introduce a new villain to the campaign. The heroes might release the prisoner to accomplish a specific goal, and the creature ends up sticking around and becoming a recurring threat.

4. A Secret Weapon

In a quest to defeat an ancient god, a rampaging primordial, or a threat to the multiverse, the player characters might face an enemy that they cannot kill or overcome. In need of some way to dispose of their foe, they track down the *Iron Flask of Tuerny the Merciless* and try to use it to capture their enemy.

Their quest doesn't end there, however. After trapping their foe, the heroes must protect the flask from falling into the wrong hands. If the villain were ever released, it certainly would seek bloody vengeance against the adventurers.

This scenario works well for an artifact or quest item version of the *iron flask*, where the urn is the keystone to a larger quest, not an item that the characters will use in their normal adventuring career.

5. Puzzle Hunt

An ancient force has been broken into pieces and sealed within several *iron flasks* that were scattered to the winds. The player characters must find the urns as part of a greater goal. They might be trying to resurrect an old god or racing against a cult bent on reforming a dangerous primordial.

This plot allows for incremental success or failure without necessarily dooming the whole quest. Each piece of the shattered entity is effectively a separate prisoner that must be dealt with. In this scenario, it is especially important to make each prisoner distinct and surprising so the pattern of finding a series of flasks doesn't grow stale.

6. Role Reversal

The player characters are the ones trapped in an *iron flask*. Either each hero is confined in a separate flask, or the whole party is imprisoned in a special flask designed to hold multiple captives. The players can create new, temporary characters for a brief adventure to free their usual party.

With the right group, it can be interesting to have one player's temporary character find the *iron flask* that contains another player's regular character. The temptation to use the bond of command when releasing the prisoner presents opportunities for dramatic roleplaying.

About the Author

Derek Guder is the event programming manager at Gen Con, where he does his best to juggle thousands of events. He has written a handful of articles for *D&D Insider*, including "The Fraternal Order of the Inner Vault." Derek is vocal and vulgar on Twitter under the handle @frequentbeef.

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